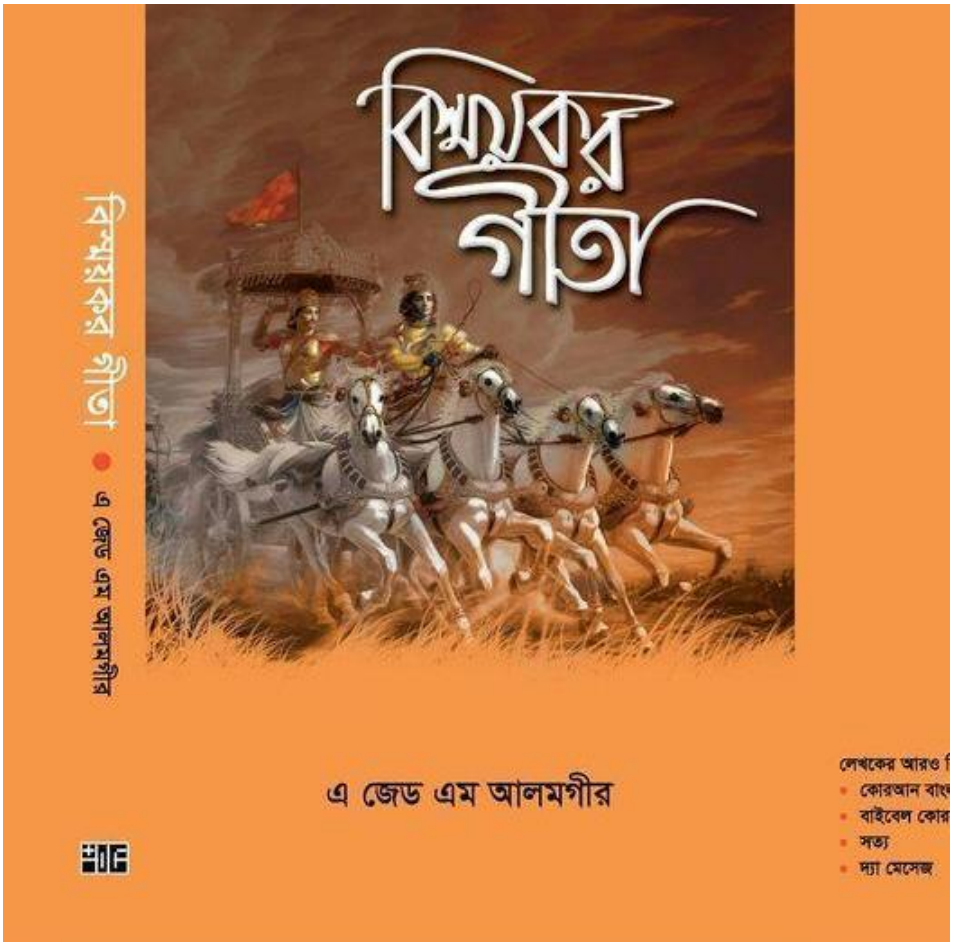

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Marvelous Gita

By A Z M Alamgir

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(The Gita is a scripture of the path of Karma Yoga within the Vedanta. To illustrate this, the word **"Yoga"** is used at the end of every chapter.)

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Preface

Mahabharata, the Battle of Kurukshetra, and the Bhagavad Gita

Kurukshetra! The field of war!! It is located in the north-western state of Haryana in present-day India. On one side, the Pandavas and on the other, the Kauravas have gathered their armies. The name "Mahabharata" is derived from the name of King Bharata. It is not known whether the events cited in the Mahabharata are history, but the subject matter is deeply educational for human life.

Things that are neglected as "small" often take on complex forms later in human life. Subsequently, they become the cause of suffering, great misery, and the destruction of society, civilization, and creation. Although it may start on a small scale within a family, it eventually shakes society, the state, and even the entire human race. The "small" is not actually small; just as immense power is hidden within an atom, these matters are educational and must be considered with gravity for the individual, family, society, and human life.

A similar event occurred among the children of Israel. What was considered a small family matter one day later turned into a great history. The origin and consequences

of that event are described in the Bible and the Quran, the echoes of which have not ended even today. All of this arises from the unbidden desires, envy, greed, or ego of a transient life (these subjects have been brought up in the author's books Bible, Quran, and Israel).

Hastinapur. Located near present-day Delhi in Northern India. Shantanu was the King of Hastinapur. Shantanu became attracted to the beauty of Satyavati, a fisherman's daughter, and married her. He intended to nominate his son **Bhishma** as the heir to the throne. However, Satyavati made Bhishma vow not to sit on the throne; instead, her son **Vichitravirya** would rule. Her ambition was for her own biological children to be the heirs to the throne; otherwise, she would leave King Shantanu. Bhishma understood his father's pain and accepted Satyavati's condition. King Shantanu passed away carrying this grief in his heart.

The two daughters of the King of Kashi, **Ambika** and **Ambalika**, were married to Satyavati's son Vichitravirya. However, he died prematurely without leaving an heir. The issue of succession remained unresolved, and Satyavati's cherished dream was shattered.

The famous sage **Vyasadeva**—also known as Vedavyasa because he divided the Vedas into four parts—was another son of Satyavati, though King Shantanu was not

his father (he was the biological son of Sage Parashara). After the death of Vichitravirya, Queen Mother Satyavati granted Vyasadeva the "Niyoga" (a practice to provide heirs). Ambika and Ambalika then gave birth to children.

From the lineage of King Bharata, two brothers, **Dhritarashtra** and **Pandu**, were born into the Kuru dynasty. Dhritarashtra was the elder, and Pandu was the younger. As for the future succession: Dhritarashtra was born blind. Despite his desire, he could not ascend the throne according to the rules. The younger brother, Pandu, ascended the throne instead. However, due to Pandu's untimely death, the blind Dhritarashtra eventually gained the throne. Pandu's five sons were raised in the royal household under the affection and supervision of Dhritarashtra and the patriarch Bhishma.

Dhritarashtra had a hundred sons, the eldest of whom was **Duryodhana**. Pandu's five sons were the **Pandavas**: Yudhishthira, Bhima, Arjuna, Nakula, and Sahadeva. As the eldest in the family, Yudhishthira was the rightful heir to the throne. But Duryodhana played foul; he could not tolerate the Pandavas. Duryodhana's ego, his ill-treatment of the Pandavas, his unjust desire for the throne, and various conspiracies resulted in today's military preparation at Kurukshetra.

Duryodhana challenged the Pandavas to a game of dice.

The Pandavas were defeated. Through this, Duryodhana and his brothers took possession of the Pandavas' wife, **Draupadi**, and attempted to disrobe her in front of the assembled royalty.

King Dhritarashtra, Patriarch Bhishma, and the teacher Dronacharya all played the role of silent spectators. Draupadi was saved by the intervention of **Shri Krishna**, who was like a brother to the Pandavas. Through this cunning game, the Pandavas were deprived of their kingdom and forced into exile for thirteen years.

Upon returning from exile, when the Pandavas sought their rightful share of the kingdom, Duryodhana refused. The Pandavas asked for only five villages. But Duryodhana would not yield even a needle-point of land without a war. This conflict divided the royalty of India; some took Duryodhana's side, while others sided with the Pandavas.

Shri Krishna was the nephew of the Pandavas' mother, Queen Kunti. In an attempt to resolve the conflict, Shri Krishna went with a peace proposal, but he was rejected. Consequently, war between the Pandavas and the Kauravas became inevitable.

"The Mahabharata" is a vast gathering of various educational events of human life—provided, of course,

that one wishes to gather, accept, or learn the core knowledge. But without a heart of devotion and a search for truth, actual learning cannot be achieved.

A war between brothers! In childhood, they all played together, ate together; their friends and companions were the same, their ancestors were the same, and their teacher of education and weaponry was the same! The same grandfather! Today, they stand facing each other with massive armies, weapons in hand, to slaughter one another. The drums of war are sounding on all sides. All of India has taken part in this.

Shri Krishna did not belong to either faction. He held no weapons. He was a well-wisher to all. However, according to the rules of distribution for the war, his vast army joined the Kauravas. But he himself became the friend and charioteer of the skilled archer and great warrior, the Pandava prince **Arjuna**. His job was to drive the chariot according to Arjuna's directions and provide him with sound counsel during the war.

Millions of soldiers died in this war. Almost every heroic warrior who participated was killed. Only the five Pandavas, Shri Krishna, and six other warriors survived. In human history, this is one of the bloodiest wars.

The pre-war situation: Arjuna expressed a desire to

observe the movements of the opposing camp. Shri Krishna pulled the chariot between the two armies. He told Arjuna to observe the enemy camp. Seeing everything, Arjuna's body became numb. The bow began to slip from his hand.

What were they doing! Those with whom he played in childhood, those who nurtured him, those who taught him the science of weaponry, those from whose hands he had eaten—everyone was present in the opposing camp with weapons in hand. They were ready to sacrifice their lives for Duryodhana. The venerable Patriarch Bhishma, the teacher Dronacharya, and many others. How could he shoot arrows at such elders? Everyone against whom he was to fight was related by blood or marriage.

A shadow of grief descended into the heart of Arjuna, one of the key commanders of the Pandava camp and a vital character of the Mahabharata. His heart expressed a reluctance to shoot arrows against his own kin and elders. Overwhelmed and indifferent, he sat down in the chariot. He resolved that he would not fight.

Despite everything, Shri Krishna presented the logic of why the war must be fought. He attempted to awaken Arjuna for the battle. In the course of that discussion, he brought up various topics regarding action (Karma),

sense of duty and responsibility, the concept of right and wrong, birth, death, the soul, life, the world, and even the cosmic reality. That conversation between Arjuna and Shri Krishna upon inspecting the battlefield is the **"Gita."**

This is not modern knowledge. Such a profound, wise discussion thousands of years ago is "extraordinary"! Even today, it presents to humanity all concepts ranging from the universe, science, and life's ethics to the Soul (Atman), the Supreme Soul (Paramatman), and the Creator. It explains through logic and the light of truth how lasting peace can be achieved in human life.

There is a conceptual alignment between the core themes discussed in the Gita and the fundamental guidance found in the Bible and the Quran. In essence, the Creator has sent the same message to all societies—as mentioned in the Quran. The subject matter of the Gita, the style of discussion, its consistency, and its presentation are extremely wonderful and unparalleled!

As a Muslim, I grew up with a completely wrong conception of the Gita since childhood. Upon reading it, I am amazed today! Moved by personal realization, I have titled it **"Marvelous Gita."** Unfortunately, there are misconceptions about the Gita in Muslim society. I make a special request to everyone to gain an understanding of the philosophy of the Gita.

Sanjaya was the charioteer of the blind King Dhritarashtra and a disciple of Sage Vyasadeva. Vyasadeva granted Sanjaya "divine vision." With this divine vision, Sanjaya sat in Hastinapur and observed all the events of Kurukshetra and informed King Dhritarashtra. In this manner, the entire Gita is presented through Sanjaya's narration.

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Chapter 1: Observing the Battlefield and Inner Conflict

(Total Verses: 46)

Summary: Arjuna expresses a desire to see whom he must fight against. Shri Krishna—Arjuna's friend, advisor, and charioteer—places the chariot between the two opposing camps. Arjuna sees that those he is expected to fight are all, in one way or another, his own kinsmen, relatives, and elders. Arjuna's heart recoils at the thought of engaging in a war that destroys one's own dynasty.

How is it possible to kill relatives and teachers? Killing elders would be a sin. Such a war would bring misfortune to the family and lead to the destruction of family traditions.

Upon inspecting the battlefield, Arjuna loses his will to fight. While trying to determine his duty, he becomes bewildered and paralyzed by indecision. He faces an "inner Kurukshetra"—a conflict within himself. He becomes overwhelmed by grief (Vishada). Therefore, this chapter is also known as **"Vishada Yoga"** (The Yoga of Dejection).

[Seeing a title like "Observing the Battlefield," one might wonder: what is the connection between a religious scripture and inspecting a war zone? In reality, the foundation for all the instructional discussions in the Gita starts from this observation. Therefore, the beginning must be understood thoroughly. The background of the Kurukshetra war from the Mahabharata was briefly highlighted in the "Preface." One must definitely read the Preface before reading the Gita.]

Verses and Commentary

Verse 1.1 Dhritarashtra said: O Sanjaya! Having assembled at the field of Dharma (Dharmakshetra), what are my sons and the sons of Pandu doing, being eager for battle?

(Commentary 1.1) The blind King Dhritarashtra wants to know the situation of the battlefield from Sanjaya.

Sanjaya observes the conditions of the war zone through his "divine vision" and informs Dhritarashtra. The word "Divine" (Dibya) refers to something godly or celestial; "Devas" are those who are extreme devotees of God. Here, **Dharmakshetra** refers to the battlefield of Kurukshetra, where a war is about to take place for the sake of Dharma—meaning rules, ethics, truth, and justice.

Verse 1.2 Sanjaya said: O King! After observing the Pandava army standing in military phalanx (military formation), King Duryodhana approached his teacher (Dronacharya) and spoke these words—

(Commentary 1.2) Sanjaya tells Dhritarashtra that Duryodhana goes to the commander Dronacharya to inform him about the strength, strategy, and mobilization of the enemy side. It is noteworthy that although Dronacharya is the commander of the Kaurava camp, he is the preceptor (Guru) of the commanders of both the Pandava and Kaurava sides. Consequently, he is not like an ordinary general; he is revered by all. Although he had to take Duryodhana's side due to circumstances, Arjuna is also his extremely beloved disciple. Duryodhana is well aware of this. Duryodhana approaches the Acharya and says:

Verse 1.3 O Teacher! Behold this vast army of the

Pandavas, which has been arranged in a phalanx with great skill by your intelligent disciple, the son of Drupada.

Verse 1.4 Here are many heroes and archers equal to Bhima and Arjuna, and there are great warriors like Yuyudhana, Virata, and Drupada.

Verse 1.5 There are also immensely powerful warriors like Dhrishtaketu, Chekitana, the King of Kashi, Purujit, Kuntibhoja, and Shaibya.

Verse 1.6 There are the incredibly strong Yudhamanyu, the mighty Uttamaujas, the son of Subhadra (Abhimanyu), and the sons of Draupadi—all of whom are great chariot-warriors (Maharathis).

(Commentary 1.3-6) Duryodhana informs his teacher and commander Dronacharya about all the heroic warriors of the enemy camp. Considering everything, he reminds him to arrange the military formation appropriately.

It is particularly noteworthy that there was a conflict between Commander Dronacharya and King Drupada, the father of the Pandavas' wife Draupadi. For that reason, Drupada performed a sacrifice (Yajna) and received a boon that he would have a son capable of killing Dronacharya. Dronacharya was aware of this.

Nevertheless, when Drupada sent that son, Dhrishtadyumna, to Dronacharya to learn the science of war and weaponry, Dronacharya generously taught him all types of military arts, tactics, weaponry, and even secret matters.

In the war of Kurukshetra, Dhrishtadyumna joined the Pandavas and directed the Pandava military formation—using the very education he had received from his Guru, Dronacharya.

By saying, "Your intelligent disciple, the son of Drupada..." Duryodhana reminds Dronacharya of that fact, so that he may conduct the war with absolute caution.

The Pandava commanders are also his own disciples. They are aware of all his tactics. Especially Arjuna, who was his extremely brilliant and favorite student. Duryodhana reminds him of this so that he does not show any kind of leniency or slackness toward them. Duryodhana says:

Verse 1.7 O best of the twice-born! I am mentioning for your information the names of those distinguished military leaders who are present to lead our army.

Verse 1.8 There is yourself, Bhishma, Karna, Kripa; Ashwatthama, Vikarna, the son of Somadatta

(Bhurishrava), and Jayadratha—who are always victorious in battle.

Verse 1.9 Besides these, there are many other heroes who are prepared to sacrifice their lives for my sake. They are all equipped with various types of weapons and are experts in warfare.

Verse 1.10 Our strength, protected by Bhishma, is immeasurable. Their strength, protected by Bhima, is limited.

Verse 1.11 Therefore, all of you, stationed at your respective positions at every entrance of the phalanx, must protect Bhishma.

(Commentary 1.7-11) Next, Duryodhana gives Dronacharya an overview of the soldiers in his own camp. Dronacharya himself is present, who is the teacher of weapons and military science for the commanders of both the Pandava and Kaurava sides. There is Bhishma, who is like a grandfather to both sides.

Others whose names are specifically mentioned include Karna, the half-brother of the Pandavas (born to Mother Kunti before her marriage to King Pandu). There is Kripacharya, whose twin sister was married to Dronacharya. Ashwatthama is Dronacharya's son.

Vikarna is Duryodhana's brother. Jayadratha is the King of Sindhu and Duryodhana's brother-in-law.

In addition, there are many heroic warriors equipped with various weapons, experienced and expert in military affairs, who are prepared to give their lives for Duryodhana.

Duryodhana's army is powerful under the supervision of Patriarch Bhishma. On the other hand, the Pandava army is limited and protected by Bhima, whose prowess, experience, and reputation are negligible compared to Bhishma. Duryodhana is optimistic about victory.

Duryodhana's victory in the war depends heavily on obtaining the full cooperation of Bhishma and Dronacharya. Duryodhana believed that these two great warriors would give him full support because they were protectors of Dharma—meaning they follow rules and keep their promises. They do not break the law.

When Draupadi, the wife of the five Pandavas, was being disrobed in front of all the royalty in the court of Hastinapur, these two did not respond despite the helpless Draupadi's desperate plea, because of the rules of the game of dice. Although Duryodhana knew that they both loved the Pandavas dearly, he believed that these two would follow the rules (Dharma) and give him

full cooperation in the war.

Although Bhishma is a great warrior, he has aged. However, his image holds high value. His presence among the Kauravas is sufficient to keep the morale of the soldiers high. Again, it is important for weakening the morale of the enemy side. The victory of the Kauravas in the Kurukshetra war depends heavily on Patriarch Bhishma's survival. Therefore, protecting him is extremely important. Duryodhana specifically reminds Dronacharya to provide full protection to Patriarch Bhishma while remaining in their respective strategic military positions. At this time:

Verse 1.12 The powerful and aged patriarch of the Kuru dynasty (Bhishma), expressing cheerfulness, blew his conch shell loudly, making a sound like a lion's roar.

Verse 1.13 Thereafter, suddenly conchs, bugles, drums, kettledrums, and war-horns all sounded together, and the noise became tumultuous.

(Commentary 1.12-13) Sanjaya says that at this time, the aged patriarch of the Kuru dynasty, Bhishma, blew his conch shell to show cheerfulness. Following him, everyone blew their own conch shells, creating a tumultuous sound on the field.

War is not a simple matter; it is a game of life and death. The heart will throb. By creating a tumultuous roar, courage is usually instilled, and enthusiasm is generated in everyone's mind. Simultaneously, this roar announces the presence of a massive army. It also works to weaken the morale of the enemy soldiers. This sound has a positive and negative effect on the psychology of the soldiers on both sides of the battlefield.

There is another psychological reason for Bhishma blowing this conch immediately after Duryodhana's briefing on the military formation. Through this, he assures Duryodhana of his sincere performance of duty on his behalf. For the Pandavas are also very dear to him; they grew up being nurtured under his supervision. Nevertheless, through this, he expresses his devotion to fulfilling his duty. He tries to remove Duryodhana's doubt. Sanjaya says:

Verse 1.14 Then, stationed in a magnificent chariot drawn by white horses, Madhava (Krishna) and the son of Pandu (Arjuna) blew their divine conch shells.

Verse 1.15 Hrishikesha blew his Panchajanya; Dhananjaya blew his Devadatta; and Bhima, the lover of food and performer of Herculean tasks, blew his terrifying conch named Paundra.

Verse 1.16-18 King Yudhishthira, the son of Kunti, blew the Anantavijaya; Nakula and Sahadeva blew the Sughosha and Manipushpaka. The great archer, the King of Kashi, and the great warrior Shikhandi, Dhrishtadyumna, Virata, the unconquerable Satyaki, Drupada, the sons of Draupadi, and the mighty son of Subhadra—O King! Each blew their own respective conch shells. [16-18]

Verse 1.19 That tumultuous sound, resonating through heaven and earth, rent the hearts of those on Dhritarashtra's side.

Verse 1.20 O King! At that time, the Pandava (Arjuna), whose flag was marked with the emblem of Hanuman, seeing the sons of Dhritarashtra positioned in battle array and the discharge of weapons about to begin, took up his bow and spoke these words to Hrishikesha—

[Shri Krishna is referred to here by the name **Madhava**. Madhava is the husband of the Goddess of Fortune, Lakshmi; hence he is called by this name. He is also addressed as **Hrishikesha**, the master of all senses. The word **Pandava** refers to Pandu's son, Arjuna. Arjuna is also addressed as **Dhananjaya**, one who has conquered wealth or divine assets.]

(Commentary 1.14-20) Sanjaya further says that when

the roars were created in the Kaurava camp, Shri Krishna, Arjuna, Bhima, Yudhishthira, and others in the Pandava camp also began blowing their respective conchs in response. With the roar of various conchs, the sky, air, and earth trembled, instilling terror in the hearts of Dhritarashtra's sons.

Sanjaya is sitting in Hastinapur observing the situation of Kurukshetra with divine vision and informing Dhritarashtra. Sanjaya says that Arjuna, becoming excited, stood in the chariot and prepared to shoot arrows at the enemies. At this time, he said the following words to Shri Krishna. Arjuna said:

Verse 1.21-22 O Achyuta! Place my chariot between the two armies, so that I may see those who stand here eager for battle and with whom I must fight in this war. [21-22]

Verse 1.23 I wish to see those who have gathered here with the desire to fight on the side of the evil-minded son of Dhritarashtra.

[Shri Krishna is addressed here as **Achyuta**. Achyuta is one who does not deviate from ethics, duty, rules, or Dharma.]

(Commentary 1.21-23) Arjuna expresses a desire to see who has come to fight on behalf of Duryodhana from the

Kuru dynasty and across India. He also wants to get an idea of the enemy's military strength and formation. He tells Shri Krishna to place the chariot in the middle of the two armies. Sanjaya says:

Verse 1.24 O Bharata! When Gudakesha (Arjuna) spoke thus, Hrishikesha (Krishna) placed the chariot in the middle of the two armies.

Verse 1.25 Pointing toward Bhishma, Drona, and all the rulers, He said: O Partha! Behold these members of the Kuru dynasty who have assembled here.

Verse 1.26 There Arjuna saw uncles, grandfathers, teachers, maternal uncles, brothers, sons, grandsons, friends, fathers-in-law, and well-wishers included in both armies.

Verse 1.27 Seeing all those friends and relatives present for the sake of war, the son of Kunti (Arjuna) was overcome with deep pity and, becoming despondent, said:

[Dhritarashtra is addressed here as **Bharata**. Elsewhere, Arjuna is also called so. They are all descendants of King Bharata, hence they are addressed this way. Sanjaya addresses Arjuna as **Gudakesha**, which means one who has conquered sleep or ignorance. Arjuna was such a

person. Arjuna is the son of Queen Kunti (also known as Pritha), the sister of Shri Krishna's father Vasudeva; therefore, Arjuna is also addressed as **Partha**.]

(Commentary 1.24-27) Shri Krishna places the chariot between the two camps. He says, "Behold these members of the Kuru dynasty who have gathered for war." It should be noted that here, the successors of Pandu are called **Pandavas** and those on Dhritarashtra's side are called **Kauravas** as the successors of the Kuru dynasty.

Arjuna saw friends, well-wishers, and relatives in both camps. Who was not there? Patriarch Bhishma, under whose affection they grew up. Teacher Drona, from whom they received education in military science and weaponry. He saw his own family, his maternal uncle's family, his father-in-law's family, friends, and elders. Seeing all those who were like friends present on the battlefield, Arjuna became bewildered with grief. With a despondent heart, he said to Shri Krishna:

Verse 1.28 O Krishna! Seeing all these kinsmen present before me with the desire to fight, my limbs are failing and my mouth is parching.

Verse 1.29 My body is trembling and my hair is standing on end; the bow Gandiva is slipping from my hand, and

my skin feels as if it is burning.

Verse 1.30 I am unable to remain steady. My mind is reeling. O Keshava! I see only omens of misfortune in this.

[Shri Krishna killed the demon Keshi, so he is referred to here as **Keshava**.]

(Commentary 1.28-30) Seeing so many kinsmen and elders in both camps on the battlefield, Arjuna's body became numb. Trembling began in his body. His mouth went dry. A burning sensation started in his body. The bow Gandiva began to slip from his hand. Arjuna could not keep himself steady. He instantly became indifferent and bewildered. He lost his will to fight.

Amidst all these preparations and activities, he could not see any benefit for himself, his family, society, or even the dynasty. He could only see the stamp of misfortune in all these arrangements and actions. In this state, he said to Shri Krishna:

Verse 1.31 O Krishna! I do not see any good in killing kinsmen in battle. How can I desire victory or happiness through this?

Verse 1.32-34 O Govinda! Of what use is a kingdom to us, or what is the point of living and enjoying happiness? When those for whom we desire a kingdom or all

enjoyments—those teachers, uncles, sons, grandfathers, maternal uncles, fathers-in-law, grandsons, brothers-in-law, and relatives—are all standing here on this battlefield, having renounced wealth and the attachment to life? O Madhusudana! Even if they kill me, I do not wish to kill them. [32-34]

Verse 1.35 To say nothing of the earth, O Janardana, what happiness will we gain by killing the sons of Dhritarashtra even in exchange for the kingdom of the three worlds?

Verse 1.36 Sin will take hold of us if we kill these aggressors. Therefore, it is not proper for us to kill the sons of Dhritarashtra along with our friends. O Madhava! How can we be happy by killing our own kinsmen?

[Shri Krishna is called **Govinda** because he gave pleasure to the cows and the senses. He is called **Madhusudana** because he killed a demon named Madhu. He is also called **Janardana**, meaning the maintainer of all living beings.]

(Commentary 1.31-36) Arjuna says that no good can come from killing kinsmen in war. There is no real victory or happiness in this. There is no satisfaction in gaining anything by killing one's own people. That grief must be carried in the heart for a lifetime. People sacrifice their

lives to protect their kinsmen. Yet in this war, kinsmen have arrived on the battlefield to kill kinsmen! If a war must be fought, it should be with an external enemy, not with one's own people.

Arjuna says, "Even if they kill me, I do not wish to kill them." Let alone the earth, even if he gained the kingdom of heaven, he would not want to enjoy royal happiness by killing relatives. Killing kinsmen would be a sin. According to the law of cause and effect, it will lead to far-reaching consequences. It would not be right to kill kinsmen. As a healthy, normal human being and from the perspective of reality, such thoughts of Arjuna are not baseless at all. Arjuna further says:

Verse 1.37-38 Even if they, with hearts obsessed by greed, see no sin in the destruction of the dynasty and treachery toward friends, why should we, who clearly see the fault in the destruction of the dynasty, not turn away from that sin? [37-38]

Verse 1.39 With the destruction of the dynasty, the ancient family traditions (Dharma) are ruined, and when Dharma is lost, irreligion (Adharma) overcomes the entire family.

Verse 1.40 O Krishna! When irreligion prevails, the women of the family become corrupt; when women

become unchaste, O Varshneya! Varnasankara (unwanted progeny) is born.

Verse 1.41 Unwanted progeny leads to hell both for the destroyers of the family and for the family itself; for their ancestors also fall, being deprived of the offerings of food (Pinda) and water (Tarpana).

Verse 1.42 By the evil deeds of the destroyers of the family, which cause the birth of these unwanted children, the eternal traditions of the race and the family are ruined.

Verse 1.43 O Janardana! I have heard through tradition that those whose family traditions are ruined dwell always in hell.

[Shri Krishna is called **Varshneya** because he was born in the Vrishni dynasty. **Varnasankara** refers to children born from the mixture of different social orders. **Jatidharma** refers to the specific duties according to one's order. **Kuladharma** refers to family worship methods and rituals—meaning the traditional religion of the ancestors.]

(Commentary 1.37-43) Obsessed with greed for power and kingdom, the sons of Dhritarashtra see no sin in the destruction of the dynasty and treachery toward friends.

They are inconsiderate. Arjuna says to Shri Krishna, "Why should we do the same thing knowingly? Why should we not turn away from an inauspicious act?"

If the dynasty is destroyed—meaning the elders, teachers, or members of the family are killed—there will be a lack of people who are the sustainers of rules in the family or society. Dharma or rules will be destroyed. Irreligion will enter the family and society.

When Dharma is lost, the womenfolk get involved in irreligious acts. This leads to the creation of unwanted progeny (Varnasankara). Unwanted progeny becomes the cause of hell.

According to the rules, offerings of food and water are made for the souls of the ancestors. This grants them liberation from sins and they attain peace. But through such evil deeds, those things are destroyed. The ancestors fall from their positions.

Due to the unwanted children born from the misdeeds of the family-destroyers, the racial and family traditions are ruined. Those who destroy family traditions dwell always in hell.

Arjuna says, "Even after noticing the fault caused by the destruction of the dynasty, why should we engage in the

same sinful act as the sons of Dhritarashtra? Then where is the difference between the wise and the ignorant, or between good and bad?" Arjuna expresses despair and says:

Verse 1.44 Alas! What a wonder! Driven by the greed for royal happiness, we have become prepared to commit a great sin by killing our own kinsmen!

Verse 1.45 If the sons of Dhritarashtra, with weapons in hand, should kill me in the battlefield while I am unarmed and unresisting, that would be better for me.

Verse 1.46 Speaking thus with a heart full of grief, Arjuna cast aside his bow and arrows and sat down on the seat of the chariot.

(Commentary 1.44-46) The inconsiderate do not hesitate even to kill kinsmen for the desire to obtain the right to use power and for royal happiness. Arjuna feels that rather than committing such a sinful act, it would be better if the sons of Dhritarashtra killed him while he was unarmed and unresisting.

Seeing his own people while observing the enemy soldiers on the battlefield, Arjuna's heart becomes heavy with grief. He presents his opinion to Shri Krishna that it would not be proper to fight such a war. With a

despondent heart, he casts aside his bow and sits in the chariot with a tired, exhausted body. Another Kurukshetra war born of inner conflict begins within Arjuna.

Sanjaya, sitting in Hastinapur, observes the situation of Kurukshetra with divine vision and informs King Dhritarashtra of all the matters of the battlefield in this way.

In the history of the world, there are many examples in different countries where children have killed parents or parents have killed their own children for the sake of power. Brother has killed brother. Kinsmen, friends, and acquaintances are even further removed.

Some have murdered, some have driven their own people out of the country. In reality, what have those who have done all this achieved? For how many days? For what? What permanent gain has occurred in their lives? Where is that fire of desire, lust, or grievance in their hearts now?

Foolish people always entangle themselves in such unnecessary worldly actions. Subsequently, they spend their lives performing all the "important" (!) tasks called "great busyness." Yet, they were supposed to perform their proper duties (?). But instead of doing that, they

have become involved in unnecessary sinful acts. They do not know, or do not believe, or forget due to delusion, that they must one day reap the fruits of their actions. It is in the context of such a situation that the following words have been spoken:

"And [recall] when We took your covenant, [saying], 'Do not shed each other's blood or evict one another from your homes.' ... Then, you are those [same ones who are] killing one another and evicting a party of your people from their homes, assisting against them in sin and aggression. ... So what is the recompense of those who do that among you except disgrace in worldly life? And on the Day of Resurrection they will be sent back to the severest of punishment. And Allah is not unaware of what you do. Those are the ones who have bought the life of this world [in exchange] for the Hereafter, so the punishment will not be lightened for them, nor will they be aided." (Al-Quran 2:84-86)

Marvelous Gita by AZM Alamgir

Chapter 2: Sankhya Yoga and Karma Yoga

(Total Verses: 72)

Summary: After inspecting the battlefield and seeing his kinsmen and teachers in the enemy camp, Arjuna loses his will to fight. The thought of having to kill his relatives and elders overwhelms him with grief. He believes that killing elders would be a sin and expresses a strong aversion to a war that destroys dynasties. The grief-stricken Arjuna seeks liberation from the agony of worldly existence. He decides not to fight and expresses a desire to adopt a life of renunciation (Sannyasa).

At this critical moment, Shri Krishna inspires Arjuna to perform his duty. He attempts to awaken him for battle

and free him from the burden of grief and guilt. Through the lens of **Sankhya** (knowledge/philosophy), He explains that there is no logical reason to grieve over death. Subsequently, through **Karma Yoga**, He discusses how one can perform actions while remaining free from sin and the bonds of karma.

The ultimate goal of life is liberation from the bonds of action and the material world. Only then can true freedom from grief, sin, and all suffering be attained—not through the mere renunciation of work. This chapter highlights how to remain free from the sense of sin while acting and how to achieve true peace by breaking the shackles of worldly attachment.

Verses and Commentary

Verse 2.1 Sanjaya said: To Arjuna, who was thus overwhelmed with pity, whose eyes were full of tears and distressed with grief, Madhusudana spoke these words.

Verse 2.2 The Blessed Lord said: O Arjuna! Where has this delusion come from at this hour of crisis? It is unbecoming of an Aryan (a noble person); it leads not to heaven but to infamy.

Verse 2.3 Do not yield to unmanliness, O Partha! It does

not befit you. Abandon this petty weakness of heart and arise, O scorcher of enemies (Parantapa)!

(Commentary 2.1) Upon seeing his relatives in the enemy camp, Arjuna is overwhelmed with grief. Sanjaya tells King Dhritarashtra that seeing Arjuna's tearful and distressed eyes, Shri Krishna felt compassion. He spoke the following words.

(Commentary 2.2) Shri Krishna says that such an expression of grief is inappropriate at a time of crisis. Such weakness of heart does not elevate a person to higher realms or states; rather, it destroys one's reputation. A person cannot advance in practical life, let alone spiritual life, with such a mindset.

Shri Krishna is surprised to see such low-level remorse in the heart of a great warrior like Arjuna, because Arjuna himself was well aware of the reasons behind this war and the matters of justice and injustice.

The phrase "unbecoming of an Aryan" is used here. At that time, "Aryans" considered "Non-Aryans" to be of lower knowledge and temperament compared to them. The word "Non-Aryan" is used as an example to denote ignorance and low-level thinking. This does not mean that every non-Aryan is devoid of knowledge.

In reality, all humans are the same. Such terms often arise in society due to historical rivalries or the prejudices of ancestors. This is an example of such a prevalent quote of that time.

(Commentary 2.3) Weakness of heart paralyzes a person. This paralysis is a form of "unmanliness" or "impotence." Such behavior is not expected from a renowned warrior like Arjuna. To resist injustice, Shri Krishna tells Arjuna to overcome this weakness and stand up with his weapon. In every society, during times of crisis, the Merciful One awakens people by being an inspiration, just as it is said:

"O you who are wrapped in garments! Arise and warn! And your Lord magnify! And your garments purify! And abomination shun! And give not, thinking to have more! And for the sake of your Lord, be patient!" (Al-Quran 74:1-7)

Whether the Kurukshetra war is a historical fact or not, many lessons have been given to humanity through it. Learning is the most important task. The greatest lesson given is that injustice must not be let go. Otherwise, the world will be filled with injustice, and the world-system will become chaotic. The establishment of unjust behavior leads to the destruction of creation. Thus, it is said:

"And if Allah did not check one set of people by means of another, the earth would indeed be full of mischief. But Allah is full of bounty to all the worlds." (Al-Quran 2:251)

Because He is Merciful, He resists the injustice of one group with another and maintains truth and justice in life and the world. Keeping life and the world in an orderly flow is the primary task of Dharma. For this reason, to keep humans established in Dharma, various rituals, regulations, and worship are necessary. Otherwise, there would be no need for religion.

Man learns to understand the inner self by looking at the outer world and understands the outer world by realizing the inner. What we call "outer" is "inner" to someone else; what we call "inner" is "outer" to another. Just as the war of Kurukshetra occurred externally, it also caused bloodshed within the heart. Hearing Krishna's words, Arjuna says:

Verse 2.4 Arjuna said: O Madhusudana! How can I counter-attack with arrows in battle against worshipful elders like Bhishma and Drona, O slayer of enemies (Arisudana)?

Verse 2.5 It is better to live in this world even by begging than to kill these noble elders. By killing them, the enjoyments we gain will be tainted with their blood.

Verse 2.6 We do not even know which is better for us—that we should conquer them or that they should conquer us. The very sons of Dhritarashtra, whom we do not wish to survive after killing, are standing before us.

(Commentary 2.4) On one hand, Shri Krishna is telling Arjuna to stand up with weapons. On the other, Arjuna asks Krishna how it is possible for him to shoot arrows at Patriarch Bhishma, under whose affection they grew up, and Teacher Dronacharya, from whom they learned the science of war, even if they have taken the side of the enemy.

(Commentary 2.5) Arjuna believes it is better to spend this life begging and having nothing than to live by killing such noble and worshipful elders. If any worldly gain is sought by killing elders, it will be stained with their blood. Even if victorious, that stain will remain on the mind. Peace will not come.

(Commentary 2.6) Humans fight to protect their own from the hands of the enemy. Furthermore, whatever is gained through victory is shared with kinsmen. These are worldly joys. For this reason, humans display heroism even at the risk of their lives. But in this war, those with whom the joy of victory should be shared are the ones present in the opposing camp. They are ready to slay one

another with weapons.

Arjuna says that humans do not know which action is beneficial and which is harmful for them. In such a situation, any decision could be made. Arjuna wants to choose begging over fighting. It is said:

"Jihad (fighting) is ordained for you, though it is hateful to you. But it may happen that you hate a thing which is good for you, and it may happen that you love a thing which is bad for you. Allah knows and you know not." (Al-Quran 2:216)

Here, "begging" hints at choosing a life of renunciation (Sannyasa) in the conventional sense by abandoning all work. Arjuna is bewildered in determining his duty: should he fight or abandon the war to follow the path of a monk? Mentally devastated, Arjuna says to Shri Krishna:

Verse 2.7 Overcome by the taint of pity and confused about my duty (Dharma), I ask You: tell me decisively what is good for me. I am Your disciple and have taken refuge in You. Please instruct me.

Verse 2.8 I do not see anything that can remove this grief which is drying up my senses, even if I were to obtain an unrivaled, prosperous kingdom on earth or lordship over the gods.

(Commentary 2.7) Arjuna breaks down mentally seeing his kinsmen and teachers. In this state, he cannot understand what should be done: "War or Renunciation?" He is paralyzed regarding duty and non-duty. Placing full faith in Shri Krishna, Arjuna seeks His counsel.

(Commentary 2.8) Bewildered by grief, Arjuna cannot steady himself. Even if he gained a heavenly kingdom like the gods without a fight, this grief would not vanish. He sees no way out of this state. All the above discussions were being described by Sanjaya to Dhritarashtra. Sanjaya says:

Verse 2.9 Having spoken thus to Hrishikesha (Krishna), Gudakesha (Arjuna), the scorcher of enemies, said to Govinda, "I shall not fight," and became silent.

(Commentary 2.9) Sanjaya tells Dhritarashtra that in such a state, Arjuna decides he will not fight. He tells Krishna, "Govinda, I shall not fight," and then falls silent.

Three things become clear from the above conversation between Krishna and Arjuna. These are the points Krishna emphasizes to inspire Arjuna to work (fight). The overall discussion of the Gita revolves around these three themes:

1. **Grief:** Having to kill kinsmen and teachers. Krishna explains there is no logical reason for this grief.

2. **Sense of Sin:** The fear that killing relatives is a sin. Krishna explains how to act so that sin does not touch the performer.
3. **Renunciation (Sannyasa):** Arjuna wants to choose renunciation to escape suffering. Krishna explains that one doesn't need to abandon work for liberation; there is a way to attain peace while performing worldly duties.

Sanjaya says:

Verse 2.10 At that time, O Bharata (Dhritarashtra), Hrishikesha, smiling slightly in the midst of both the armies, spoke these words to the despondent Arjuna.

Verse 2.11 The Blessed Lord said: You grieve for those who are not worthy of grief, yet you speak words of wisdom. The wise grieve neither for the living nor for the dead.

(Commentary 2.10) Just before the war starts, Arjuna decides not to fight. What could Krishna do? He remains calm and steady. With a slight smile, He speaks to Arjuna.

(Commentary 2.11) Shri Krishna tells Arjuna: "Your arguments about sin, the destruction of traditions, the fall of ancestors, and the corruption of women are all words of a learned man! Yet, you are grieving for that which is not worthy of grief!"

"You are distressed seeing kinsmen in the opposition. You want to abandon the war and even choose renunciation. But are those for whom you grieve feeling the same for you? Moreover, are you not ignoring the primary reason for this war—justice versus injustice?"

"If justice is defeated by injustice, then injustice will be established in the world. Deluded by temporary attachment and false Maya, you want to abandon your duty. Yet, you are here among your kinsmen not by your own decision, but by the decision of Providence."

"None of these kinsmen were yours, nor will they remain so. You have become entangled in Maya through a short contact in this world. Memory makes you suffer. Memory is a delusion—a cause of bondage. It will not last. But the history of your deviation from the path of truth and justice will remain forever. Everyone, including future generations, will suffer the consequences. Injustice will be established. Even if they are kinsmen or teachers, they are wrongdoers." As it is said:

"O you who believe! Stand out firmly for justice... even if it be against yourselves, or your parents, or your kin, and whether it be (against) rich or poor: for Allah can best protect both. Follow not the lusts (of your hearts), lest you swerve; and if you distort (justice) or decline to do

justice, verily Allah is well-acquainted with all that you do." (Al-Quran 4:135)

Shri Krishna says that those who have a correct understanding of life and the world do not grieve for the dead or the living. They rise above grief to perform their duty. They prioritize the protection of creation, for which the Creator sent them.

Despite such knowledge, grief or pain is bound to arise in the human mind at the thought of the death of loved ones. How do those who do not grieve manage to do so? Through what knowledge?

This is where the philosophical discussion of the Gita begins. To dispel Arjuna's grief, Krishna presents scientific, logical, and analytical discussions on various topics starting from sin and virtue. This discussion remains a vital guideline for humanity. Krishna says:

Verse 2.12 Never was there a time when I did not exist, nor you, nor these kings; nor shall any of us cease to be hereafter.

Verse 2.13 Just as the embodied soul passes through childhood, youth, and old age in this body, so it passes into another body; the steady-minded are not deluded by this.

(Commentary 2.12) Shri Krishna says there was never a time when He, Arjuna, or the kings present did not exist, nor will they cease to exist in the future. Every living being existed, exists, and will exist.

Krishna tries to awaken Arjuna from his state of grief by creating a stir in his thoughts. He presents the ultimate philosophy of life and the world. Through the ages, the Creator provides such lessons to humanity. As it is said:

"He has sent down upon you, [O Muhammad], the Book in truth, confirming what was before it. And He revealed the Torah and the Gospel. Before, as guidance for the people. And He revealed the Criterion [of right and wrong]." (Al-Quran 3:3-4)

How can this be? We know that people die and disappear from this world forever. Why was it said this way?

When we die or are killed, do we really die? Krishna presents that philosophy to Arjuna. This vision is so wonderful, logical, and scientific that all people should know about it.

(Commentary 2.13) It is said that the living body is constantly changing. Childhood is followed by youth, and youth by old age. No one ever grieves over these changes. Death is simply another stage of this change.

In reality, the living being (Jiva) does not die. Upon death, the being changes bodies. It moves from one body to another and is born anew. One whose intellect is steady in this knowledge is not disturbed by death. They do not grieve.

Upon death, only the body becomes inanimate. There can be no reason to grieve for a decaying, lifeless, material body.

The One who created the form of the body can change that form. If the form changes, the body becomes unrecognizable. If the body becomes unrecognizable, the attachment (Maya) for that body also vanishes. Attachment to a familiar or specific shape is temporary. It wasn't there once, and it won't be there again. Life will continue as life does. The wise understand the uselessness of such false attachment and know the ultimate outcome. They do not neglect their duty by grieving over the temporary form of a material body in a transient life. Neglecting duty today will adversely affect future generations and create chaos in the world. These matters deserve more serious thought. Therefore, do not grieve pointlessly. Krishna says:

Verse 2.14 O son of Kunti! The contacts of the senses with their objects, which cause heat and cold, pleasure

and pain, are transitory. They come and go, O Bharata! Learn to endure them.

Verse 2.15 O best among men! The wise person who is not distressed by these, and remains steady in both pleasure and pain, is eligible for immortality.

(Commentary 2.14) In nature, cold comes and then heat comes. What is cold? Or what is heat? We know or realize these only because of our senses. If we didn't have senses, we wouldn't know these feelings.

Sometimes the feeling of pleasure arises in the body, and sometimes pain. Like heat and cold, these are sensory perceptions. They come and go. As it is said:

"Allah will grant after hardship, ease." (Al-Quran 65:7)

"And these days [of varying fortunes] We alternate among the people..." (Al-Quran 3:140)

Heat-cold and pleasure-pain are impermanent and transitory. None of these are permanent in life. Shri Krishna says one must learn to endure these temporary things for a while; they will disappear in due time.

The grief Arjuna feels today is also not permanent. It is temporary and arises from sensory perception. If there were no senses, the objects would remain, but the being

would feel nothing. Life would go on. Even one's own life will not last forever. Therefore, today's grief is valueless. It must be endured for a while. It is not desirable to abandon duty and take renunciation because of being overwhelmed by grief. As it is said:

"Muhammad is not but a messenger. [Other] messengers have passed on before him. So if he was to die or be killed, would you turn back on your heels [to unbelief]?" (Al-Quran 3:144)

In other words, abandoning duty due to the death of someone or the thought of death is not a correct judgment.

(Commentary 2.15) It is said that one who can remain steady and impartial amidst such dualities as heat-cold and pleasure-pain attains immortality. Krishna asks Arjuna to be established in that knowledge. What is immortality? That discussion will follow.

If pain were permanent or eternal, it would certainly be a matter of concern. But these are temporary or impermanent. Can grieving over impermanent things be the work of a wise person? Let's see what the learned say about the permanent and the impermanent. Krishna says:

Verse 2.16 The unreal (Asat) has no being; the real (Sat)

never ceases to be. The seers of truth have concluded this by studying the nature of both.

(Commentary 2.16) Whatever is "Unreal" or temporary never lasts. It perishes. On the other hand, the "Real" or eternal never perishes. It is permanent; it only changes form. This is the conclusion.

It is said that by analyzing the nature of both the eternal and the impermanent, the seers of truth have reached this conclusion. Krishna first presents this conclusion of the seers to Arjuna. Why? Because:

Verse 2.17 Know that to be indestructible by which all this is pervaded. None can cause the destruction of that Exhaustless One.

Verse 2.18 These bodies of the embodied soul, which is eternal, indestructible, and immeasurable, are said to have an end. Therefore, fight, O Bharata!

(Commentary 2.17) After the above conclusion, it is said that you should know that which pervades this entire universe as indestructible. There is no destruction of this inexhaustible nature. After knowing the certain conclusion of the seers, let there be no doubt in your mind.

(Commentary 2.18) When a person dies, their still body

remains. it doesn't vanish into thin air. But there is no movement or consciousness in that body. The question is: what disappeared from the body that caused it to become silent, still, and lifeless? Why is it called "dead"?

The body is merely an outer covering made of material nature. The presence inside that keeps the body active—when that leaves, the body is dead and eventually decays. That is, when "I" leave the body, "my" outer shell remains. Therefore, this material body is not "I." The body is not my true self.

It is said that the one by whom this entire body is pervaded, active, and conscious is eternal and indestructible, and cannot be perceived by the senses. It has no body of its own; it takes refuge in the material body. It is called the **"Atman" (Soul)**.

The soul is the cause of consciousness in the body. "I" am related to the soul, not the material body. The soul represents "I." The soul is the true nature of the living being.

Upon death or being killed, only the body, which is the refuge of the soul, is destroyed. But the soul has no death. Therefore, "I" have no death. When dead or killed, the soul changes bodies. Only the material body is destroyed. That is why it was said earlier that the unreal

has no permanence—meaning the impermanent material body has no permanence. It is perishable. On the other hand, the real never perishes. The soul is real; it never perishes. Therefore, "I" or "we" have no death. Thus, it is not the work of a wise person to be grief-stricken at the thought of death.

The presence of the soul creates consciousness in the body. Consciousness is the manifestation of the soul. When the conclusion of the seers regarding the "Real" and "Unreal" was mentioned above, it was said with this material body and conscious soul in mind. Regarding the soul, it is said:

"O mankind, fear your Lord, who created you from one soul and created from it its mate and dispersed from both of them many men and women." (Al-Quran 4:1)

What is the need for grief for that which has no end or destruction? Even if Bhishma and Drona are killed, there is no reason to grieve. Arjuna is grief-stricken thinking they will die by his hand, but in reality, they will not die by his hand.

One who knows things appropriately never grieves for a decaying material body. That is why it is said that the wise grieve neither for the dead nor for the living [Ref: Gita 2:11]. Or it is said that there was never a time when I, you,

or these kings did not exist [Ref: Gita 2:12]. Everyone will exist in some state or another. Therefore, Krishna tells Arjuna to fight without unnecessary grief.

One point is particularly noteworthy here. It is said, "by which all this is pervaded." By "all this," the entire world is being referred to. Later it is said, "these bodies of the embodied soul... are perishable." In this case, it refers not to the whole world but to the bodies of individual beings.

Therefore, when the soul is described as pervading the entire world, the whole universe we see is inside a "Universal Form" (Vishwarupa) body. The material nature we see outside is the inner material nature of a giant body. The matter must be understood that way.

Again, when we see it in the context of a small individual being, we understand the material nature of that individual's body. That which makes the whole world alive and conscious is the **Paramatman (Supreme Soul)**. As it is said:

"Allah! ... He is the Living, the Eternal, the Supporter of all existence." (Al-Quran 2:255)

Small individual living entities are related to the original source, the Supreme Soul. That is why everyone is alive and conscious. God alone is the Living One and the

Sustainer of all existence. He alone holds all the entities of the world.

The soul of every individual being is called **Jivatman**, and the soul of the body pervading the whole world is called **Paramatman**. The Jivatman, as a part of the Paramatman, is endowed with the qualities or attributes of the Paramatman. Just as a piece of gold is also complete gold, or a spark of fire is also fire. Regarding the soul, it is said:

Verse 2.19 He who thinks the soul is a killer, or he who thinks the soul is slain—both are ignorant. The soul neither kills nor is it ever killed.

Verse 2.20 The soul is never born, nor does it ever die; it has never come into being, nor will it ever cease to be. It is unborn, eternal, ever-existing, and ancient. Though the body is destroyed, the soul is not destroyed.

Verse 2.21 O Partha! He who knows the soul to be indestructible, eternal, unborn, and immutable—how can such a person kill anyone or cause anyone to be killed?

(Commentary 2.19) If someone believes they have killed another, or if someone believes they have been killed, they do not truly understand the reality. Neither possesses proper knowledge of the Atma-tattva

(science of the soul), the "I," or the relationship between the body and the soul.

That which is thought to be slain is not actually slain, for the soul is indestructible. It merely migrates from one body to another. Similarly, he who kills is not truly a killer, because the soul cannot be destroyed. As it has been said:

"And do not say of those who are killed... that they are dead. Rather, they are alive, but you perceive it not." (Al-Quran 2:154)

The question arises: If this is true, is there no sin in killing? If so, then religion, deeds, vice and virtue, rules, rewards and punishments, heaven and hell—all lose their necessity or logic. The answer to this question can be found by studying the entire Gita.

(Commentary 2.20) The soul is never born; it is unborn. The soul is eternal and ancient. It has no death. As it has been said:

"He neither begets nor is He born." (Al-Quran 112:3)

When someone is slain or dies, only their material body is destroyed. But the soul is eternal; it has no destruction. As it has been said:

"Everyone upon the earth will perish, and there will remain the Face of your Lord, Owner of Majesty and Honor." (Al-Quran 55:26-27)

The living being or the individual soul is a part or a spark of the Supreme Lord. The qualities of the Supreme are present within it. The individual soul also does not die.

(Commentary 2.21) If one becomes enlightened with the above knowledge regarding the soul and holds a firm belief in it, they must also accept that no one can kill anyone or cause anyone to be killed. The "I" or the soul is beyond grasp. How can that which cannot be destroyed be destroyed? Therefore, it is said that one should not grieve for the material body alone.

The soul undergoes no change. It is immutable, undecaying, and stable. That is why, even in old age, we feel the same joy and enthusiasm within our minds as we did in childhood or adolescence. The soul remains eternally the same. Only the material body decays and dissolves. The soul is perpetual, ancient, and permanent. Further regarding the soul:

Verse 2.22 Just as a person discards worn-out clothes and puts on new ones, the soul similarly discards worn-out bodies and enters into new ones.

Verse 2.23 No weapon can cut this soul, nor can fire burn it; water cannot wet it, nor can the wind wither it.

Verse 2.24 The soul is uncuttable, unburnable, insoluble, and undryable. It is eternal, all-pervading, stable, immovable, and ancient.

Verse 2.25 The soul is said to be invisible to the senses, beyond thought, and unchangeable. Therefore, knowing the soul to be such, you should not grieve.

(Commentary 2.22) Just as a human discards old clothes to wear new ones, the soul discards an old or unusable body to assume a new one suitable for use. This is the philosophy. In this philosophy, it is a matter of faith.

There are many signs of the Creator in nature that help humans understand creation! There are creatures that shed their skin or shells to become like new. As it has been said:

"Indeed, within the heavens and earth are signs for the believers. And in the creation of yourselves and what He disperses of moving creatures are signs for a people who are certain in faith." (Al-Quran 45:3-4)

(Commentary 2.23-25) It is further said of the soul that no weapon can pierce it, fire cannot burn it, water cannot dampen it, and wind cannot dry it. The soul is uncuttable,

unburnable, insoluble, and cannot be withered. It is eternal, perpetual, all-pervading, unchangeable, immovable, and ancient or timeless. The soul is unmanifest, meaning beyond the senses and even beyond thought, and it is immutable.

Those who believe in this philosophy regarding the soul will not grieve over anyone's death after knowing all this. They know that even if a loved one is slain in battle, it is not the end of their life; rather, it is the beginning of a new life. It is merely a physical change, much like the transition from childhood to adolescence, or adolescence to youth. Therefore, grieving is meaningless. It is said:

"And never think of those who have been killed in the cause of Allah—rather, in the path of truth and justice—as dead. Rather, they are alive with their Lord, receiving provision." (Al-Quran 3:169)

Some knowledge makes a person stagnant, while other knowledge makes them active. If one does not believe in a philosophy, its results cannot be obtained, because it cannot infuse power into the mind. Yet, the important role of philosophy is to infuse strength into the heart through faith, helping one move forward in life.

Sri Krishna tries to explain this to Arjuna in various ways. The true nature of a living being is the soul, not the

material body. The soul is indestructible. Upon death, only the material body is destroyed. Therefore, do not grieve over death; instead, fight.

But what if Arjuna's heart cannot believe in the above concept? What will be the result then? Sri Krishna tries to explain it to him in another way. He says:

Verse 2.26 Even if you think this soul is constantly born and constantly dies, even then, O mighty-armed one! You should not grieve for this soul.

Verse 2.27 For one who is born, death is certain, and for one who is dead, birth is certain. Therefore, you should not grieve over what is inevitable.

Verse 2.28 O Bharata! All beings were unmanifest before birth, manifest in the middle stage, and will become unmanifest again after destruction—what is there to grieve about in this?

[Arjuna is addressed here as "Mahabahu," meaning one whose arms possess great strength.]

(Commentary 2.26) Sri Krishna says: Even if you cannot think of the soul as permanent and indestructible and believe it is born with the body and dies with the body, even then you should not grieve. Why?

(Commentary 2.27) It is said that everyone must die one day. He who is pained by someone's death today will himself not exist after a few days. In earthly terms, it is just a matter of a small time gap. In the cosmic scale, it is negligible. So what is the value of this grief? The mind will be sad for a few days, and then everyone will resume normal life. Even if he does not fight, Arjuna cannot save his family members from the hand of death forever. Death will happen one day. As it has been said:

"Every soul will taste death... and the life of this world is nothing but the enjoyment of delusion." (Al-Quran 3:185)

"Wherever you are, death will overtake you, even if you should be within towers of lofty construction." (Al-Quran 4:78)

It is useless to grieve over the inevitable. Therefore, one must perform their duty. Duty cannot be abandoned. Arjuna must fight.

(Commentary 2.28) All those present on the battlefield today did not exist in this world at one point. They were all unmanifest. Currently, in this middle period, they are manifest because they have assumed a body or form. Certainly, this familiar form will become unmanifest again after death. This truth applies to all living beings in the world at all times. It is just a difference of a few days

earlier or later. Death will occur even without war; the form will not remain. The characteristics or essence of the being and its inherent power will remain. Using those elements, it will be possible to build the same or a similar form again. So what is the need for grief? As it has been said:

"Is not He who created the heavens and the earth able to create the likes of them? Yes, [it is so]; and He is the Knowing Creator." (Al-Quran 36:81)

Truly, no one has certain knowledge regarding the soul, the being, or life force. Yet, the soul is the cause of life! Naturally, the question arises: What actually is the soul? Sri Krishna says:

Verse 2.29 Someone sees this soul as amazing, another describes it as marvelous, and another hears of it as wonderful; yet even after hearing of it, no one truly knows the soul.

Verse 2.30 O Bharata! The soul within the bodies of all beings is eternally inviolable. Therefore, you should not grieve for any living being.

(Commentary 2.29) Although much has been said about the soul above, no one knows it with certainty. Due to its subtlety, knowing and understanding the soul is not easy. The soul is beyond the senses and beyond

comprehension. It cannot be caught, touched, or understood; essentially, humans do not know what the soul is. When it is discussed, the soul seems miraculous. It is merely an object of wonder to everyone. No one is aware of its true nature.

Man can only understand that when "something" leaves the body, the body turns into a decaying, lifeless object. Therefore, this body is not "I" or my true self. Various doctrines or philosophies exist on this matter in different societies. Despite subtle differences, the core themes or philosophies are the same.

That is why it is said: some see the soul as amazing, some describe it as marvelous, some hear of it as wonderful, and some cannot understand it even after hearing.

(Commentary 2.30) The "I" that resides in this body—that soul is perpetual, undecaying, indestructible, and ancient or eternal. Just as water cannot be cut, fire cannot be cut, and air cannot be cut, the soul cannot be slain. The soul does not die. Then should a human grieve for a decaying, lifeless material body when someone is slain? Truly, one should not grieve for any being. Therefore, it is not proper for Arjuna to be grief-stricken thinking that Grandsire Bhishma, Teacher Drona, and many kinsmen will be killed. It is also not right to abandon the war out of grief.

The soul is "I." The soul is indestructible. Therefore, there is nothing to grieve in someone's death. Even if the body is destroyed, the being does not die. First, Sri Krishna explained it to Arjuna this way. Then he says: Even if you think the soul is always subject to birth and death, even then there is no reason for grief. Death is inevitable for all. So what is there to grieve about the inevitable? Sri Krishna now tries to explain it to Arjuna in another way. He says:

Verse 2.31 Considering your own duty (Dharma), you should not waver. For a warrior (Kshatriya), there is no better engagement than fighting for the sake of righteousness.

Verse 2.32 O Partha! Happy are the warriors to whom such opportunities for war come unsought, opening for them the doors of heaven.

(Commentary 2.31) Sri Krishna says: Even considering your Svadharma (personal duty), you should fight. Here, Svadharma refers to the specific work assigned to one in a caste-based society. Truly speaking, work is religion.

Arjuna is a Kshatriya! The religion or duty of a Kshatriya is administration, protecting the subjects, ensuring their safety, etc. When necessary, they must face war. In this context, a "righteous war" (Dharma-yuddha) means

protecting justice or principles, self-defense, social defense, national defense, protecting subjects, and establishing justice. Kshatriyas receive training in weaponry. In governance and protection, this skill was once indispensable.

The duty of a Kshatriya is to fight when the time and need arise. Turning away from duty or a righteous war is unrighteous. Such is the decree of the scriptures. According to the rules, a Kshatriya cannot directly embrace sannyasa (renunciation). Yet, out of grief, Arjuna wants to follow that path.

Performing one's own duty is true religious practice. Deviating from duty or religion is considered an injustice or a sin. It is considered a sin because it is seen as negligence in one's duty and obligation toward God. What does performing duty toward God actually mean?

Maintaining the order of the world is a vital duty toward God; saving the world from destruction is a duty toward God; upholding truth and justice is a vital duty toward God; maintaining the balance and stability of the world is a duty toward God—truly, these are considered proper fulfillments of duty toward God.

The question of justice and injustice is involved behind this war. In matters of religion, justice and injustice are the

primary considerations. Upholding truth and justice means protecting creation and the world from destruction. These acts are considered service to the Supreme. Some call it performing duty toward Allah.

If one refrains from resisting injustice, injustice becomes established in society. In that case, refraining from duty is seen as negligence in duty toward God. Such irresponsibility can cause the destruction of the world. All responsible persons must share the burden of the resulting sin of that injustice. Therefore, for a Kshatriya, there is no better work than fighting for the sake of righteousness. Because in this way, it is possible to serve the Supreme or fulfill duty toward Him in the best possible way. That is why it is said:

"Be dutiful to Allah and be with those who are true." (Al-Quran 9:119)

"O My servants who have believed, fear your Lord. For those who do good in this world is good." (Al-Quran 39:10)

Reader, these arguments are not just to explain things to Arjuna. To help humanity make the right decision and follow the correct path in times of crisis, the Creator presents the knowledge of truth among all in this way. These are hard and ultimate truths.

(Commentary 2.32) If a Kshatriya is killed in war, the doors of heaven are opened for him. These are matters related to faith—words intended to infuse inspiration and motivation into the soul. When the opportunity for such a war arises, a Kshatriya becomes naturally delighted. It is regarded as a golden opportunity to ascend to a higher realm. As it has been said:

"So let those fight in the cause of Allah who sell the life of this world for the Hereafter." (Al-Quran 4:74)

Whatever has been said above about the true nature of a being or the soul—even if that does not satisfy the mind, Arjuna should perform his duty as a Kshatriya and fight.

Sri Krishna is telling Arjuna to fight even considering his duty. In a time of crisis, Arjuna cannot neglect his duty. Because he has been raised for this. He must fight if necessary.

If Arjuna does not fight, and instead leaves the war to embrace sannyasa, Sri Krishna warns him of the consequences in the context of reality, saying:

Verse 2.33 If you do not fight this righteous war, you will lose your own duty and fame, and incur sin.

Verse 2.34 Moreover, all people will speak of your infamy forever. For a respectable person, dishonor is worse than

death.

Verse 2.35 The great chariot-warriors (Maharathis) who hold you in high esteem will think you have withdrawn from the battlefield out of fear, and you will fall into disgrace.

Verse 2.36 Your enemies will say many unspeakable things. They will disparage your prowess. What could be more painful than this?

(Commentary 2.33-36) Considering the practical consequences of abandoning the war, Sri Krishna tells Arjuna: You have a great reputation as a Kshatriya or warrior. If you abandon the battlefield, it will be trampled into the dust. You will be known forever as a coward. Your enemies will not understand the agony of your mind, nor will they acknowledge it. They will spread scandals. Those who hold you in high esteem will think you left out of fear, and you will be disgraced. Enemies will say unspeakable things and mock your strength. What could be more painful?

For a man of honor, dishonor is worse than death. Therefore, dying on the battlefield is better for you than abandoning the war.

The sin you feared regarding the destruction of the clan or the killing of elders—the same sin will be incurred by

abandoning your duty. Because for a Kshatriya, turning away from a righteous war is a great sin. That is how the matter is established. Even from that perspective, you must fight.

After analyzing the negative aspects of refraining from war, Sri Krishna highlights the practical benefits of engaging in war. He says:

Verse 2.37 If slain, you will attain heaven; or if victorious, you will enjoy the earth. Therefore, arise, O son of Kunti! Being determined, resolve to fight.

(Commentary 2.37) If you win the war, you will gain the opportunity to enjoy kingdom or material earthly happiness. On the other hand, if you die while performing your duty, according to the Creator's decree, you will attain heaven or a better result/higher life after death. Therefore, performing your duty or fighting is best for you considering both sides.

As it is said, heaven or paradise is certain for the Jihadis. Fighting for truth and against injustice is "Jihad." This is essentially what is called a righteous war. The mutual wars between Hindus, Muslims, Jews, Buddhists, and Christians are not truly righteous wars; those are wars created out of self-interest or ego. For a Kshatriya, performing duty means fighting against injustice. One

who performs Jihad is known as a "Mujahid." What's in a name? The action and the message are the same. Heaven is certain for the Kshatriya or the Mujahid. Therefore, being certain of this, Sri Krishna asks Arjuna to be firmly resolved for war. As it has been said:

"And he who fights in the cause of Allah—in the path of truth, justice, and welfare—and is killed or achieves victory—We will bestow upon him a great reward." (Al-Quran 4:74)

The concept of "performing one's duty" must be understood with proper knowledge here. Because those against whom the war is being fought are also Kshatriyas. In their view, they too are performing their duty. If they die in war, will they also receive the same result, i.e., attain heaven? If so, what will happen to the consideration of justice and injustice?

Performing duty as a Kshatriya is linked with attaining heaven because a Kshatriya does not fight for an unjust cause, but for truth, justice, and welfare. This is truly performing duty for the sake of God or Allah. Only then is he considered worthy of attaining heaven. Thus, the concept of "religion" (Dharma) is deeply connected with the sense of justice and injustice, and this is embedded in the inherent meaning of the word. Therefore, when the word "religion" is uttered, the matter of justice and

injustice does not need to be stated separately. It is said:

"And if two factions among the believers should fight, then make settlement between the two. But if one of them oppresses the other, then fight against the one that oppresses until it returns to the ordinance of Allah—that is, the instruction of peace and justice. Then if it returns, make settlement between them in justice and act justly. Indeed, Allah loves those who act justly." (Al-Quran 49:9)

Religion is not limited to following some grammar while sitting in a temple or mosque. It has a deep connection with living justly in real life. If the primary goals—establishing and upholding truth and justice, ensuring the progress and welfare of life and the world, and maintaining order and peace—are not achieved through religion, then there is no further need for religion in human society.

Since injustice and oppression were committed against the Pandavas, and they are fighting to resist injustice and establish justice, the above statement specifically applies to them. As it has been said:

"And oppression is greater than killing." (Al-Quran 2:191)

Sri Krishna was surprised to see Arjuna's mental weakness regarding engaging in the Kurukshetra war. He called such behavior "un-Aryan" (non-noble) [See Gita

2:2]. Such behavior does not suit a hero like Arjuna. He tries to inspire him to engage in war in various ways and presents the following arguments. He says:

1. The body and soul are not the same; they are separate. Even if the body is destroyed, there is no death for the being, the soul, or the "I." Therefore, there is no reason to grieve thinking someone will die.
2. If you think the soul is born and dies with the body, even then there is no reason for grief. Because death is inevitable for all. Why grieve for the inevitable?
3. Even considering your personal duty (Svadharma), you should fight.
4. Considering the practical situation, you should fight even thinking about the bad consequences of not fighting.
5. Fighting is beneficial considering both sides. If slain, heaven is attained; if victorious, the world is enjoyed. Thus, considering all aspects, fighting is the best decision.

Despite presenting all these arguments—science of the soul, the greatness of duty, good and evil, gain and loss—doubt remains in Arjuna's mind. What if it is a sin to kill elders and kinsmen in war? In that context, Sri Krishna says:

Verse 2.38 Consider happiness and distress, gain and

loss, victory and defeat as equal, and fight for the sake of fighting; in this way, you will not incur sin.

(Commentary 2.38) Sri Krishna says: Consider good and evil, happiness and distress, gain and loss, victory and defeat as equal. In any dualistic situation, always keep the mind equanimous and stay firm and unshakable in that state. Do not lose yourself in joy, nor become depressed or hopeless in sorrow. As it has been said:

"In order that you not despair over what has eluded you and not exult [in pride] over what He has given you." (Al-Quran 57:23)

The principles are the same everywhere. Sri Krishna says there is no need to think about the result. Whatever the result may be, simply follow your duty as a Kshatriya. Perform your task. Fight for the sake of the battle with all your intellect and strength. Concentrate your mind on this.

If you perform your duty, your personal religion, or your assigned work with heart and soul and one-pointedness, sin does not occur. Therefore, fight. The question is: why will sin not occur if work is done this way? Reader, the answer to that question will be found in the chapters of the entire Gita.

Arjuna has been saying from the beginning that it will be

a sin to kill elders in war. Sri Krishna, therefore, emphasizes the matter of sin, saying that if you fight considering it your duty without thinking of gain or loss, you will not incur sin.

Next, he sheds light on Karma-yoga (the yoga of action)—the knowledge through which one can act without being bound by the results of action. Consequently, nothing of sin or virtue touches one; one can remain free from sin. Sri Krishna says:

Verse 2.39 Thus far, I have described this to you through the lens of Sankhya (analytical knowledge), O Partha! Now listen to this regarding Yoga (the yoga of selfless action). Being equipped with this understanding, you will be able to free yourself from the bondage of karma.

Verse 2.40 In this yoga, there is no failure or loss; even a small amount of progress in this practice protects one from great fear.

Verse 2.41 O scion of the Kurus! In this yoga, the intellect is resolute and one-pointed. But the intellect of the irresolute is many-branched and endless.

(Commentary 2.39) To explain things to the grief-stricken Arjuna, Sri Krishna has so far presented an analysis based on Sankhya. But what if Arjuna's heart is still not satisfied? Therefore, he introduces the subject of

Yoga.

The question is: Why did Sri Krishna start the discussion with Sankhya to convince Arjuna? What is Sankhya? And why is he now introducing Yoga? What is Yoga?

The idea that killing kinsmen and elders would be a sin, that the fruits of that sin must be suffered, and that one would have to go to hell—where did these concepts of sin and hell come from within Arjuna?

The answer is the "Vedic Philosophy." In India, the world of human life and thought is heavily influenced by Vedic philosophy. Concepts like sin-virtue and heaven-hell primarily stem from Vedic philosophy. A belief deeply rooted in the heart is not easily removed. "Poison must be removed with poison." Therefore, Arjuna's sense of sin must be addressed using the discussions of the Vedic scriptures themselves. He must be rescued from mental breakdown and engaged in his duty, which is the war.

In fact, some knowledge makes a person paralyzed, while other knowledge revitalizes them. Knowledge is a critical factor. It is the lack of proper knowledge and faith in that knowledge that has overwhelmed Arjuna with grief. It has left him indecisive in a moment of crisis. He could not determine what to do and wanted to abandon the war to take up Sannyasa (renunciation). Thus, Sri Krishna brings

up the topics of Sankhya and Yoga.

Sankhya and Yoga are both branches of Vedic philosophy. To understand these properly, one needs a basic understanding of Vedic philosophy, as the Vedas are the primary source of these philosophical discussions. Whether we speak of Sankhya or Yoga, all discussions are Veda-centric. The discourse of the Gita revolves primarily around Vedic philosophy.

There are four Vedic scriptures: Rigveda, Samaveda, Yajurveda, and Atharvaveda. Rigveda is considered the first book of the Eternal or Aryan religion. Its period is thought to be around 4500 BCE. Each Veda is further divided into four parts: Brahmanas, Samhitas, Aranyakas, and Upanishads.

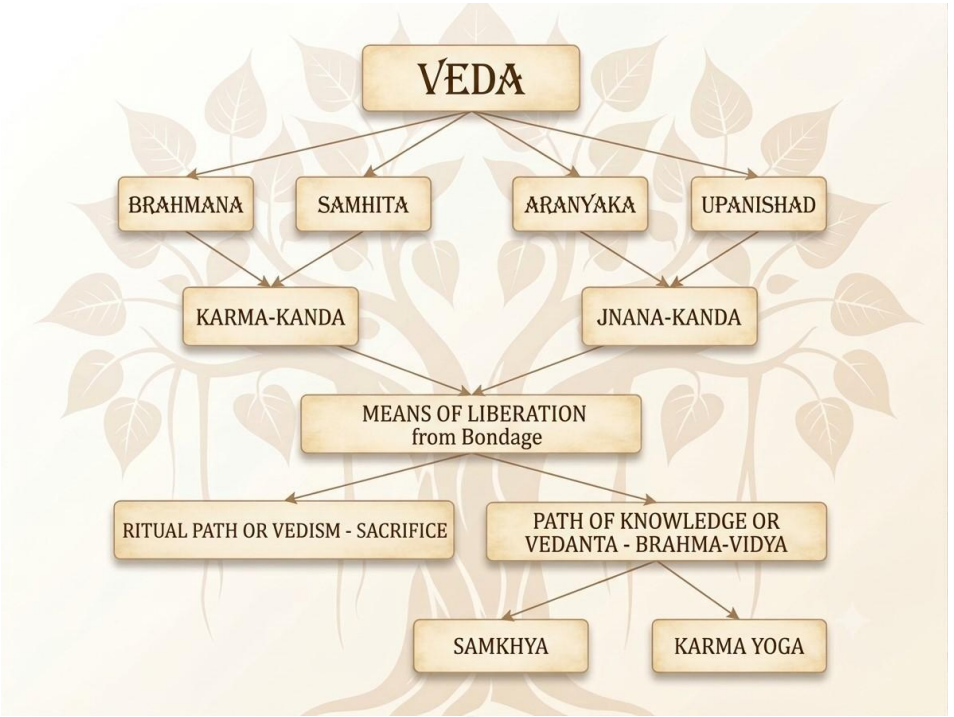
The Brahmanas and Samhitas are called the Karma-kanda (section of rituals) of the Vedas, and the Aranyakas and Upanishads are called the Jnana-kanda (section of knowledge). The Karma-kanda contains various mantras and rules for sacrifices (Yajnas). The Jnana-kanda discusses the knowledge of Brahman.

Vedic philosophy essentially discusses the means for a living being, bound by material nature, to attain Moksha (liberation). Both Karma-kanda and Jnana-kanda show two different paths to liberation from bondage.

From Karma-kanda came Karma-marga (the path of ritual action), and from Jnana-kanda came Jnana-marga (the path of knowledge). According to Karma-marga, Vedic rituals or sacrifices are the only religion for a being. Through these, liberation and immortality are attained. There is no other way.

On the other hand, Jnana-marga states that liberation cannot be attained through rituals alone without knowledge of the Supreme Lord. While Karma-marga may lead to heaven, it does not lead to Moksha. Attaining heaven and attaining Moksha are not the same thing. Brahman is the source of everything. Therefore, one must know Brahman through the yoga of knowledge. One must attain the nature of Brahman. Only then is there liberation, because Brahman is free. This is the Brahman-ism of the Upanishads.

Marvelous Gita by AZM Alamgir



What is Brahman? It is said that He in whom everything is situated, who is within everything, who is all-pervading, through whose existence everything exists, who is One and Eternal—He is Brahman.

It is noteworthy that Karma-marga is also called Vedavada. Conversely, Jnana-marga is called Vedantavada. Jnana-marga emerged from the Upanishads of the Vedas. Since the Upanishads are the end part (Anta) of the Vedas, they are called Vedanta. In reality, both are Vedic, as Vedanta or the Upanishads are part of the Vedas.

Within the Vedantic followers of Jnana-marga, two paths emerged. One is Sankhya and the other is Yoga.

According to Sankhya, action (Karma) is the cause of worldly bondage. Therefore, action must be renounced. Without the renunciation of action, Moksha is impossible. A being is bound by action and freed by knowledge. Thus, they renounce action to practice knowledge. This is also called Sannyasa-marga. Vedantic Jnana-marga or Sannyasa-marga is Sankhya. To escape worldly suffering, Arjuna wanted to renounce action and adopt this path of renunciation.

On the other hand, Yoga states that action is not the root cause of bondage. The root cause of bondage is attachment to objects and the desire to enjoy the fruits of action. Therefore, there is no need for Sannyasa or renouncing work. Liberation can be attained by working while renouncing attachment and the desire for results. This is Yoga or Yoga-marga. Yoga-marga is the Vedantic Karma-yoga.

These concepts existed in society even before the advent of the Gita. However, in the Gita, the essence of vast Vedic knowledge is presented beautifully and concisely, from which true knowledge can be gained.

It should be noted that the Karma-marga of the Vedas

refers to ritualistic sacrifices. This is the "Vedic path of action." The Vedic path of action is Kamya Karma (desire-driven action) or Sakama Karma. On the other hand, the path of action cited in the Gita is Karma-yoga. This is called "Vedantic Karma-yoga." Vedantic Karma-yoga is Nishkama Karma (selfless action).

When work is done by renouncing the desire for results, it is called Nishkama Karma. Nishkama Karma is Karma-yoga. Why is there no bondage in selfless action? These things will become clear in the overall discussion of the Gita.

Conversely, when work is done with the desire for results, it is called Sakama Karma. The Vedic path of ritual action is Sakama Karma because, through sacrifices, worldly objects or heaven are desired. Behind this type of practice is the desire to attain the object of craving. Hence, it is "desire-driven action."

The word "Yoga" usually refers to postures (Asanas), breathing exercises (Pranayama), Ashtanga Yoga, or Samadhi. However, in the Gita, the word Yoga is not used in that sense. In the Gita, Karma-yoga or Yoga means selfless action. This is Vedantic Karma-yoga. Vedantic Karma-yoga is the main theme of the Gita.

To indicate that the Gita is a scripture of the Yoga or

Karma-yoga path within Vedanta philosophy, the word "Yoga" is used at the end of every chapter.

The word Yoga has various uses. Therefore, its proper meaning must be understood from the context. For Yoga is the "skill in action." Or it can be said that becoming skillful in action is Yoga.

Sri Krishna first tried to explain to Arjuna through Sankhya that grieving is meaningless. Victory leads to enjoying the world, death leads to heaven—gain from both sides. Not fighting leads to loss of fame. All discussions were conducted by analyzing things through knowledge and reality. This path of meticulous analytical reasoning on any subject is Sankhya.

According to the Gita, Moksha cannot be attained without the knowledge of the soul (Atma-tattva). Therefore, the discussion on the soul was held—how the soul is separate from the body, how the soul is the true nature of the being, and how the soul never dies, so there is no reason to grieve.

After the analysis of Sankhya, Sri Krishna introduces the discussion of Yoga. He says that if one works while established in Yoga, there is no bondage of action. As a result, neither sin nor virtue touches the person. One can remain free from bondage. He inspires Arjuna to work

with that knowledge. Thus, he says, "Now listen to this regarding Yoga. Being equipped with this understanding, you will be able to free yourself from the bondage of karma" [See Gita 2:38-39].

It is noteworthy that birth and action are the causes of material bondage. This bondage is the cause of all suffering. As long as a being is bound by the material body, they must suffer. Bondage is what is afflicting Arjuna with grief and pain. It is causing him indecision. He is hesitant to determine his duty.

Action creates good or bad results. War is also an action. There, if one performs actions contrary to justice, bad results will follow; sin will occur. If elders are killed, the fruits of that sin must be suffered.

To suffer the results, one must assume a body. To attain a body, one must be born. If born, one is bound again by the bondage of action. Until one is completely free from the material body or material nature, this cycle of birth and death due to the bondage of action will continue. Therefore, the ultimate goal of life is to be completely free from this material bondage, the bondage of action, or the cycle of birth and death. Sri Krishna has imparted that core message of the Vedantic path of Yoga to Arjuna.

If one performs actions while established in Yoga, there is no bondage of action. Neither sin nor virtue touches them. One can attain complete liberation from material bondage. Therefore, he is telling Arjuna not to renounce action or take Sannyasa, but to perform action while established in Yoga. What is the benefit of working while established in Yoga?

(Commentary 2.40) Vedic sacrifices are performed with the hope of attaining heaven or fulfilling desires. If these sacrificial ceremonies are started but not completed, no result is obtained. It is even believed that any error or deviation results in sin. But in Karma-yoga, there is no such great fear of sin.

The practice of Karma-yoga naturally leads the practitioner toward self-elevation. Nothing external needs to be done here. One only needs to internalize the knowledge and remain unwavering with a satisfied heart in that knowledge. In one sense, one does not even have to "try" to be satisfied; knowledge itself satisfies the heart automatically.

Once satisfied by knowledge, this yoga practice never fails, because knowledge is never lost. At some point in life, this knowledge will bear fruit. It will eventually rescue the being from the great fear of the bondage of action.

The same task performed in Sakama Karma is performed in Nishkama Karma. The difference lies only in intention, knowledge, and perspective. One must know how to walk with this knowledge. The mind must be firmly established in the realized knowledge. There are even more important benefits to working in this yoga.

(Commentary 2.41) Without one-pointedness, one cannot concentrate deeply on a task. Without deep concentration, success does not come.

When the heart is one-pointed toward the goal, a person does not think about happiness or distress, success or failure, good or bad. Realizing the importance and necessity of the work, they work with deep concentration, singular mind, and singular meditation. They work with the heart. They work out of their own interest. Only then does success come. Therefore, being one-pointed in work is very important. Yoga helps the heart become one-pointed toward the goal. How? That discussion will follow.

Those who lack one-pointedness in work essentially have no specific goal. Due to the lack of a specific goal, they cannot concentrate on any specific matter. With a goal-less, scattered heart, they want to concentrate on everything. They want to get everything. That is why it is said: the intellect or knowledge of the irresolute is many-

branched and endless. In this way, success does not come in any work. There is no interest or sincerity in any task. Citing the Vedas on this matter, Sri Krishna says:

Verse 2.42-43 O Partha! People with little knowledge, who are attached to the flowery words of the Vedas, who argue that there is nothing beyond heaven, who are devoted to rituals for the sake of heavenly enjoyment, high birth, and power—they are deeply attached to these pleasant-sounding words. [42-43]

Verse 2.44 The minds of those attached to enjoyment and power are misled by such words. Consequently, their intellect can never be resolutely one-pointed on any matter.

(Commentary 2.42-44) Most people regard the words of the Vedas as the ultimate authority on religion. Following the message of the Vedas, they perform sacrifices in the Vedic path of action. There are rules for various sacrifices in the Vedas. It is said that by performing these sacrifices, various results are obtained in this life and the hereafter—such as wealth and power in this life, and heaven or celestial nymphs in the next.

These sacrificial acts are Kamya Karma—actions driven by desire and craving. Through these, people desire influence, wealth, or heaven in the afterlife. Hence, they

are "desire-driven actions."

Ordinary people consider these to be true religious acts. They think there is nothing in religion beyond this. Yet, attaining Moksha and attaining heaven are not the same. These matters will become clear throughout the chapters of the Gita.

In truth, desire-driven action makes the craving for enjoyment even more intense. These enchanting, result-oriented words of the Vedas make the heart restless, unstable, and scattered. In this way, concentration or one-pointedness in work does not come.

The true purpose of the various rituals and sacrifices mentioned in the Vedas is to gradually bring the being to the stage of self-realization and to know the Supreme Lord. But humans are essentially driven by greed and desire. They do not concentrate on the core issue. They want to attain immediate objects of desire. As it has been said:

"Wealth and children are [but] adornment of the worldly life. But the enduring good deeds are better to your Lord for reward and better for [one's] hope." (Al-Quran 18:46)

In a restless heart, there is no concentration on God. Therefore, people with such a mentality do not find God. Sri Krishna discourages Arjuna from being attracted by

such flashy words of the Vedas. He says:

Verse 2.45 O Arjuna! The Vedas deal mainly with the subject of the three modes of material nature (Tri-gunya). Rise above these three modes. Be free from dualities, always established in purity (Sattva), free from the thought of acquisition and preservation (Yoga-kshema), and established in the self.

Verse 2.46 All the purposes served by a small pond are at once served by a great reservoir of water; similarly, all the results obtained from the desire-driven actions of the Vedas are attained by a person who is enlightened and knowledgeable about the Supreme Brahman.

(Commentary 2.45) Sri Krishna says: The Vedas are primarily concerned with the three modes (Tri-gunya). That is, the Vedas have formulated rules and regulations prioritizing the three modes of nature: Sattva (goodness), Rajas (passion), and Tamas (ignorance). Under the influence of these three modes, a being is bound to worldly life. Considering the influence of the three modes, the Vedas have given different methods of practice and sacrifices for different people according to their nature, so that everyone can worship according to their nature and attain liberation.

Sri Krishna is asking Arjuna to be established above the

three modes. Then he will no longer be bound by material bondage under their influence. As a result, there will be no need to follow the various rituals and rules of the Vedas in the quest for liberation. How to rise above the three modes? Sri Krishna says: for this, one must be free from dualities, always established in Sattva, free from Yoga-kshema, and established in self-knowledge.

Opposing states like happiness-distress, laughter-tears, good-bad are what constitute duality. One must be free from duality and become equanimous. One should not be over-excited in happiness, nor should one be distressed in sorrow. In all situations, one must remain equally steady and unwavering. This means the modes of nature can no longer influence the person. This state is being established above the three modes.

To rise to the level beyond the modes (Nirguna), one must cross the modes of Tamas and Rajas and always stay established in the mode of Sattva or pure existence. Then it will be possible to keep oneself restrained through knowledge and intellect. Negative modes will not be able to influence one uninvited. Character strength will be established, and rising to a higher level will be easy and possible.

One must renounce Yoga-kshema. "Yoga" is the acquisition of what one does not have, and "Kshema" is

the preservation of what one already has. Renouncing Yoga-kshema means giving up the constant worry of earning and protecting possessions. These thoughts and anxieties are the cause of worldly attachment and bondage. Therefore, one must remain free from these thoughts. Only then will it be possible to rise above the three modes.

According to the Gita, liberation is not attained without self-knowledge (Atma-tattva-jnana). Therefore, the Gita provides instructions on self-knowledge along with action. Self-knowledge is the knowledge regarding the soul or the Supreme Soul/Supreme Lord. That is, learning to recognize and understand oneself. What is the soul, what is life, what is the body, what is the difference between matter and spirit or body and soul; where did I come from, where will I go, what is the relationship with whom—trying to know these things. Keeping the relationship with the Supreme Lord uninterrupted. Being one-pointed in that. This knowledge opens the path to liberation. One must rise above the three modes by becoming enlightened with this knowledge.

(Commentary 2.46) It is said: all the needs fulfilled by many small water bodies are fulfilled all at once by a very large reservoir. Similarly, he who has become enlightened with the knowledge of the Supreme Brahman has

reached that level by knowing and understanding everything. He knows the essence and the underlying meaning of why every instruction of the Vedas must be followed. He is a knower of the Vedas and a knower of Brahman. Such a person is fully knowledgeable about Vedic scriptures and Brahman. Such a person established in Brahman no longer needs the Vedas. All the results obtained by performing various desire-driven actions or sacrifices mentioned in the Vedas are attained at once by the person who is knowledgeable and experienced regarding the Supreme Brahman. Sri Krishna is asking Arjuna to rise to that level.

It should be noted that for the management of a large portion of ordinary people in the world, there is a need to follow effective Vedic rules and regulations. This cannot be denied. Because the uncomprehending minds of some people are turbulent with cravings and desires. As it has been said:

"No! But you love the immediate [life] and leave the Hereafter." (Al-Quran 75:20-21)

The hearts of those agitated people must also be kept calm. Such people are the majority in the world. However, Sri Krishna is forbidding Arjuna from taking that path. Then what should be done or how should one proceed? Sri Krishna says:

Verse 2.47 Your right is to work only, but never to its fruits; let not the fruit of action be your motive, nor let your attachment be to inaction.

Verse 2.48 Perform your duty established in Yoga, O Dhananjaya (Arjuna), renouncing attachment! Be equanimous in success and failure. Such equanimity is called Yoga.

Verse 2.49 Renounce inferior action; work through the yoga of intellect (Buddhi-yoga), O Dhananjaya! Take shelter in that level of consciousness. Those who desire the fruits of their work are of a small-minded mentality.

(Commentary 2.47) Everyone has the right to perform their own duty or follow their own religion (Svadharma). However, truly speaking, no one has the right even to enjoy the fruits of their own actions. The true right to enjoy or distribute the fruits belongs only to Him who is the cause behind life, the world, and creation. It is said:

"Say, 'Indeed, the matter belongs entirely to Allah.'" (Al-Quran 3:154)

God is the cause of all causes. The right to enjoy and distribute results belongs solely to God. As a Kshatriya, Arjuna's duty according to his religion is to fight or perform Jihad for the sake of truth and justice. He has a right to that action. Since he has a right, he can perform

that action. But that work cannot be done with the desire to enjoy the fruits of the action. That is why it is said: let not the fruit of action be the motive, cause, or inspiration for your activity.

Arjuna wanted to abandon the war and take up Sannyasa. In the common sense, Sannyasa means renouncing all work. But renouncing all work can never bring welfare to life and the world. If everyone wanted to follow that path, creation itself would be destroyed. Sri Krishna says: let not your attachment be to the renunciation of action or Sannyasa either.

The Gita does not encourage working with a mentality of gaining desires through the elaborate sacrifices of the Vedas. Nor does it support complete inaction or so-called Sannyasa. Work must be done. The question is, how should work be done?

(Commentary 2.48) It is said that the desire for the fruits of action and attachment to objects are the true causes of bondage. Sri Krishna therefore asks to work by renouncing attachment. But renouncing the desire for results and attachment to objects is not easy. One cannot renounce them just by wanting to. Their attraction pulls strongly. Therefore, practice (Sadhana) is needed.

One must keep the state of the mind equanimous in all types of opposing or dualistic states such as success-failure, happiness-distress, gain-loss, attainment-nonattainment. Just as one should not be over-excited in happiness or joy, one should not be distressed, agitated, or hopeless in sorrow.

Such a mental state of equanimity in both good and bad situations is "Yoga." A steady and stable state. Free from restlessness. One is being told to work while keeping the mental state steady like this. But achieving such a mental state is also not an easy thing. Humans will naturally get agitated.

This is where the importance and greatness of Yoga lie! Yoga can make this impossible possible. It helps to elevate the mental state to that level. That is why one is told to work while established in Yoga.

(Commentary 2.49) It is said that those who are of a low and mean mentality are the ones who crave results. Behind the work done with the hope of enjoying results, a greedy mentality is at play. Even if these types of people perform religious acts, they do not or cannot truly concentrate on God. Their eyes remain fixed on the result. In fact, they are greedy.

Sri Krishna asks Arjuna to renounce such inferior work. He

asks him to work in the light of intellect or knowledge, renouncing the desire for results and greedy, low mentalities. Understanding the matters properly, he asks him to work selflessly in that consciousness for life, the world, creation, and human welfare.

The same task can be done with a selfish mentality and also with a selfless attitude. Because it is done by applying intellect in the light of knowledge to remain free from bondage, selfless action or Karma-yoga is also called Buddhi-yoga (the yoga of intellect).

Desire-driven action (Kamya Karma or Sakama Karma) and selfless action (Nishkama Karma) are never on the same level. The position of a selfless worker is at a much higher level. What is the benefit of working through the yoga of intellect? It is said:

Verse 2.50 He who is engaged in the yoga of intellect can free himself from both vice and virtue in this very life. Therefore, engage in Yoga. Skill in action is Yoga.

Verse 2.51 The wise, engaged in the yoga of intellect, renounce the fruits of their actions and become free from the bondage of birth. In this way, they attain a state free from all disturbances.

(Commentary 2.50) Selfless action is the Karma-yoga or Buddhi-yoga spoken of in the Gita. If one works through

the yoga of intellect, there is no bondage of action. No good or bad result is accumulated. One can remain free and safe from both vice and virtue. As a result, just as heaven is not attained, more importantly, one does not have to go to hell either.

It is said that the yoga of intellect is the true skill of working, and becoming skillful in work is Yoga. Therefore, one is told to be skillful and engage in Yoga to perform work. How does this skill work?

(Commentary 2.51) The philosophy is: until one is completely free from the material body, a being must return to the world to enjoy the fruits of their actions. To return to the world, they must be born. By being born, they are again bound by the bondage of the material body. A specific material body is attained according to past actions. According to the nature or character of the attained body, one enjoys good or bad results. If born, death is also inevitable. In this way, until one is completely free from this bondage of material nature, one continues to revolve in the life cycle of birth and death. This is the bondage of birth or the bondage of action.

When fallen into the material world, the desire for results and attachment to objects keep the being distressed. Frustration and pain appear when objects are not attained. Even if attained, the fear of losing them persists.

Peace does not come. As soon as one craving is fulfilled, another arises. One has to suffer life-ending hardships to achieve these. Thus, the entire life is spent through the suffering created by cravings and desires. Moreover, there is dirty competition, envy, and violence. Everything steals the peace of mind.

Action is the cause of birth. Because a being must take birth to enjoy the good or bad fruits of action. When born, the being falls into the bondage of material nature. And bondage is the root cause of all suffering. Therefore, one must be free from the bondage of birth. But how?

It is said that the desire to enjoy the fruits of action binds one to material bondage. Therefore, the desire for results must be renounced. If the fruits born of action are renounced, the action is completely exhausted or dissolved. From that action, no result—good or bad, vice or virtue—is accumulated [See Gita 2:38-39]. If results are not accumulated, rebirth for the sake of enjoying results does not occur. The reason for taking birth is exhausted. Consequently, liberation from bondage is attained. These are matters related to faith.

Wise sages, therefore, renounce the fruits of their actions. By renouncing the fruits, they become free from the bondage of birth and attain a life free from disturbances and suffering. This is the result obtained

from selfless action or Karma-yoga. That is why one is told to work selflessly while established in Yoga. How can such a successful yogi established in Yoga be recognized? Sri Krishna says:

Verse 2.52 When your intelligence crosses the dense forest of delusion, you will then become indifferent to what has been heard and what is yet to be heard.

Verse 2.53 When your intelligence, no longer bewildered by the various interpretations of worldly or Vedic rewards, remains steady and unshakeable in Samadhi (deep meditation), then you will be established in Yoga.

(Commentary 2.52-53) The intelligence or knowledge of a person motivated by desire is often clouded by worldly matters like acquiring wealth, having children, or achieving social status. Consequently, they cannot focus on spiritual knowledge or the true purpose of life.

When someone's intelligence transcends these worldly attachments and delusions, they can enter into deep, focused knowledge.

Upon entering this profound knowledge, one is no longer confused by the alluring promises of Vedic or worldly rewards they have heard in the past or may hear in the future. They become detached and neutral toward all such matters. Hence, it is emphasized:

"O humanity! ... Let not the worldly life deceive you, and let not the deceiver (Satan) deceive you concerning Allah." (Al-Quran 35:35)

"Know that your wealth and your children are but a trial." (Al-Quran 8:28)

It is said that only when the intelligence is no longer distracted by various worldly or Vedic promises, and the mind is no longer restless, is it possible to remain steady in Samadhi. When the mind is firmly established in Samadhi, one is said to be established in Yoga. Arjuna then asks:

Verse 2.54 O Kesava! What are the symptoms of a person whose consciousness is merged in Samadhi (the Sthitaprajna)? How does he speak? How does he sit? How does he walk?

(Commentary 2.54) Arjuna wishes to know the characteristics of a Sthitaprajna—one established in steady wisdom through Yoga. He asks about their speech, their state of being, and their conduct. Sri Krishna replies:

Verse 2.55 When one renounces all desires of the mind and remains satisfied within the Self by the Self alone, then he is called a Sthitaprajna (one of steady wisdom).

Verse 2.56 He whose mind remains unperturbed in sorrow, who is free from longing in pleasure, and who is devoid of attachment, fear, and anger—he is called a sage of steady wisdom.

Verse 2.57 He who is unattached to everything, neither rejoicing in receiving the pleasant nor grieving over the unpleasant, is firmly established in wisdom.

(Commentary 2.55) A person successfully established in Samadhi is a Sthitaprajna—someone who is calm and steady yet possesses profound wisdom.

Worldly desires cause mental restlessness. When one is free from these desires, restlessness disappears, making deep, one-pointed meditation possible. External thoughts can no longer cause a disturbance. In such a state, one merges deeply with their own consciousness. Who is this "Self"? It is the Atman (Soul). One becomes one with the Atman, and a strong bond of friendship is formed with the Self. This is the state of being in Samadhi.

One must also understand that the individual soul has no independent existence unless it maintains a relationship with the Supreme Lord. Therefore, one who feels a constant, close connection with the Atman is essentially absorbed in the Supreme.

Notably, there are specific rules for achieving Samadhi.

When the Upanishadic sages began researching life, the world, and Brahman, they concluded that the Supreme Brahman is the source of the universe. He exists within the body as the Inner Witness (Antaryamin). He must be known and attained through meditation. To do this, one must be absorbed in the Atman.

This process is known as Ashtanga Yoga, Raja Yoga, or Samadhi Yoga. This system emerged from the path of knowledge in the Upanishads and was later systematized by Sage Patanjali. Through this, the mind is connected deeply with the Supreme by being absorbed in the Atman.

Yoga is the means to establish a relationship with the Supreme through Samadhi. To be "absorbed" means to fix the mind within the Atman. Through Yoga, one stays free from unnecessary thoughts. Yoga removes restlessness and calms the mind, channeling all thoughts in one direction—toward God. Thus it is said: "In this Yoga, the intelligence or knowledge becomes certain and one-pointed" (Gita 2:41).

When one's relationship is with the Supreme Lord of the universe, everything else appears trivial and valueless. Worldly matters no longer serve as motivation.

Action requires motivation. In desire-driven action

(Sakam Karma), the motivation is the desire for results. But in Nishkam Karma (selfless action), there is no personal fruit to enjoy. Why then would someone do it? Where is the motivation?

For the selfless worker, the motivation is the Supreme Lord Himself! The physical act may look the same as a desire-driven act, but the intention and knowledge differ. Devotion to God is the sole inspiration for renouncing the fruits of labor. This is a great sacrifice, as most people work only for results. Only a Yogi renounces the fruit for the sake of God. Such a person is one in a million.

Selfless action is the work of great souls and is done for the welfare of creation. This is the true teaching of religion. Therefore, it is said: "Abandon inferior work; work through the Yoga of intelligence. Take shelter in that consciousness. Those who seek results are of a narrow mindset" (Gita 2:49).

The successful Yogi feels pure bliss within themselves by being absorbed in the Supreme. This is far above any worldly or material gain. He is satisfied within himself. None but a true Yogi knows this taste. Such a person of realization is a Sthitaprajna.

(Commentary 2.56-57) A steady-minded person does not become anxious or depressed in sorrow. They keep

themselves steady. They do not become overly ecstatic in joy; they remain free from longing. They view these things as fleeting and do not react. They know that nothing is permanent—what exists today may not exist tomorrow. They are free from attachment to the senses, the fear of losing objects, or anger. Their focus is on the Controller of all—the Supreme. He is their only inspiration. Nothing can shake them from their goal.

For the same reason, they are detached from all worldly attractions. They neither rejoice at getting something dear nor become dejected or hopeless when facing something unpleasant. They remain equanimous in all favorable or unfavorable situations. Nothing "exalts" them because they reside in a high state of knowledge, and nothing can "degrade" them because they are certain of their position. Their knowledge and mental state are complete. This is the hallmark of a Sthitaprajna. How does such a person remain steady? It is said:

Verse 2.58 He who can withdraw his senses from the objects of the senses, just as a tortoise withdraws its limbs within its shell, is firmly established in wisdom.

Verse 2.59 For one who abstains from sense enjoyment, the sense objects may fade, but the taste (longing) for them remains. However, upon seeing the Supreme, even this longing ceases for the person of steady wisdom.

(Commentary 2.58) When the senses come into contact with objects, attachment is born, which binds the living being. Sense objects are like dangers.

Just as a tortoise protects itself by pulling its limbs into its hard shell, one who can withdraw their senses from objects prevents the mind from becoming restless or disturbed. Such a person's mind becomes calm and steady. Yoga is the method to restrain the senses.

(Commentary 2.59) One can restrain the senses through various rules or Yogic practices. This prevents physical enjoyment, but these are often "artificial" means because the internal desire persists. This causes mental struggle and restlessness. Such a person is not a true Sthitaprajna. Unless desire is neutralized from within, one cannot be truly steady.

It is said that when one merges into the Atman, they experience pure bliss and infinite satisfaction. This "seeing the Supreme" is the only way to truly end worldly desires.

The happiness found in God-consciousness is permanent and far more pleasant and safe than sense pleasure. Once one tastes this higher pleasure, they naturally turn away from lower sense pleasures. One does not have to force sense control; for a Sthitaprajna

who has seen the Supreme, worldly desires vanish naturally. Hence:

"O humanity! ... Let not the worldly life deceive you..." (Al-Quran 35:35)

Until one reaches this level of understanding, it is better to remain engaged in work. One should keep themselves busy so the mind doesn't wander into unnecessary matters. Restraining the senses is difficult. As Sri Krishna says:

Verse 2.60 O son of Kunti! The turbulent senses forcibly carry away the mind of even a wise person who is striving for self-control.

(Commentary 2.60) The senses are agitators. By coming into contact with objects, they bring in information that makes the mind restless with desire. A restless mind forces a person to act, for better or worse. This is true even for those who are very diligent and possessive of discernment. The mind is difficult to conquer. What should be done? Sri Krishna says:

Verse 2.61 Restraining all the senses and focusing on Me, one should remain steady. He whose senses are under control is of steady wisdom.

(Commentary 2.61) If someone merely withdraws their

senses physically but keeps thinking of objects, their mind will not be at peace. True success isn't achieved this way. Yoga is the path to restrain the senses while connecting with the Supreme. Only by focusing on God can the senses be truly mastered. When the senses are mastered, true wisdom is established. When one's actions become God-oriented, it becomes Nishkam Karma Yoga. A Karma Yogi is a true Sthitaprajna.

Once a person tastes the transcendental bliss of a relationship with the Supreme, material pleasures seem secondary and trivial. Hence:

"The evil and the good are not equal, even if the abundance of evil attracts you. So fear Allah, O people of understanding, that you may be successful." (Al-Quran 5:100)

What happens if the mind is not focused on the Supreme? Sri Krishna says:

Verse 2.62-63 While contemplating sense objects, a person develops attachment to them. From attachment, desire arises; from desire, anger is born. From anger comes complete delusion; from delusion, the wandering of memory. From the loss of memory, the intelligence is destroyed, and when intelligence is lost, the person perishes (falls down).

(Commentary 2.62-63) If the mind is not engaged in meditating on the Supreme, it seeks sense objects. Constant dwelling on these objects leads to attachment. Attachment leads to the desire to possess. If that desire is blocked, anger arises toward the obstacle. Anger destroys discernment (delusion). Delusion leads to the loss of memory (forgetting one's true nature or the consequences of actions). This results in the destruction of intelligence—the ability to decide right from wrong. When intelligence is gone, the person falls.

"Beautified for mankind is the love of that which they desire—of women and sons, heaped-up sums of gold and silver, fine branded horses, and cattle and tilled land. That is the enjoyment of worldly life, but Allah has with Him the best return." (Al-Quran 3:14)

Instead of being absorbed in worldly matters, one is urged to focus on the Supreme. One must keep the mind away from sense objects by staying busy with welfare-oriented, selfless work. This is the intelligent way to live—Buddhi Yoga. He who can control himself is truly fortunate. It is said:

Verse 2.64 But the self-controlled person, moving among objects with senses under restraint and free from attachment and aversion, attains serene self-satisfaction.

Verse 2.65 With the attainment of self-satisfaction, all his miseries come to an end. The intelligence of such a cheerful-minded person soon becomes firmly established; he is indeed a Sthitaprajna (one of steady wisdom).

(Commentary 2.64-65) Enjoying sense objects is not strictly forbidden. However, it is crucial that the objects do not forcibly pull the mind toward a path of evil. Even if one is drawn toward them, one must keep oneself under self-control.

A self-controlled person, free from attraction (Raga) and aversion (Dvesha), whose senses are under their own command, can engage with worldly objects and still attain pure self-satisfaction. This leads to true contentment and a pure, tranquil heart, ending all forms of sorrow and mental agony.

When the mind is cheerful, restlessness disappears and the person becomes calm. The behavior of such a calm, steady, and wise person is governed by discernment. They act with forethought, understanding, and self-restraint. Being free from attachment and aversion, they do not act excessively or become slaves to their senses.

A self-controlled, cheerful person may momentarily deviate but will quickly return to their state of wisdom.

Spiritual contemplation or remembrance of God strengthens a person with such controlled mental power. Hence, it is said:

"I am the strength of the strong, devoid of passion and attachment." (Gita 7:11)

"Indeed, prayer prohibits immorality and wrongdoing, and the remembrance of Allah is greater." (Al-Quran 29:45)

On the other hand, the condition of one who is not connected to the Supreme and lacks spiritual contemplation is described:

Verse 2.66 For the unsteady (unconnected), there is no transcendental intelligence, nor is there any spiritual contemplation. For one without contemplation, there is no peace. And how can there be happiness for one who is unpeaceful?

Verse 2.67 As a gale sweeps away a boat on the water, even one of the roaming senses upon which the mind focuses can carry away a person's intelligence.

Verse 2.68 Therefore, O mighty-armed! One whose senses are completely restrained from their objects is firmly established in wisdom—he is a Sthitaprajna.

(Commentary 2.66-68) One who is not joined in Yoga or

lacks spiritual thought cannot possess self-knowledge. Such a person has not learned to know or understand themselves and remains ignorant of their relationship with the Supreme. Without the shelter or thought of the Supreme, the senses cannot be truly mastered. One whose senses are not mastered has no peace.

The five senses are sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch. The mind is the center of these senses. All sensory knowledge is felt in the mind, causing it to fluctuate and making the person's heart restless with worldly desires. If the mind focuses on even one of the five sense objects (form, taste, smell, sound, touch), that object steals away one's wisdom—much like a wind forcibly pushes a boat away from its destination.

The mind is under the senses, and wisdom (Prajna) is under the mind. When wisdom is stolen, the person becomes deluded, the heart becomes restless, and they stray from the path. One whose senses are not under control can never find peace in the contemplation of worldly desires. Without peace, where is true happiness?

Therefore, one whose senses are completely withdrawn from sense objects is said to have a steady mind. Only in a steady mind is Samadhi possible. One who attains Samadhi establishes their wisdom. Arjuna then asks how such a person lives. It is said:

Verse 2.69 What is night for all living beings is the time of awakening for the self-controlled; and the time of awakening for all beings is night for the introspective sage.

Verse 2.70 As the ocean remains steady and full despite the incessant flow of rivers entering it, so does the Sthitaprajna remain undisturbed despite the entry of desires; they merge within him. Only such a person attains peace, not the one who strives to satisfy those desires.

(Commentary 2.69) Self-controlled or introspective sages generally do not prefer crowded environments. Metaphorically, it is said that when it is night for all beings, the self-controlled are awake. In the silence and solitude of the night, such sages enjoy transcendental bliss through spiritual practice. This is their time for thought, action, and absorption in the Soul or the Supreme. These moments bring them immense joy that others cannot even imagine, while worldly people are asleep.

Conversely, when living beings are "awake" (busy with worldly toil), it is "night" for the introspective sage—meaning they avoid the clamor of crowds and rest from material concerns.

This metaphor can also mean that those without spiritual

thought are "asleep" to self-knowledge while "awake" to worldly desires. The controlled Yogi is "awake" to the Soul while "asleep" to sense enjoyment. To most, the soul and the Supreme are like a dark night—they see nothing—but the Yogi sees everything because he has entry into that world. The worldly toil for material pleasure is "darkness" to the Yogi. He stays in the world, but the world does not affect him.

(Commentary 2.70) Through the senses, various thoughts constantly enter a being, creating desires and destroying peace. But these cannot disturb a Sthitaprajna.

A person of steady wisdom is like the ocean—vast in heart and deep in knowledge. Just as the ocean remains steady regardless of the constant inflow of water (neither decreasing nor increasing), the Sthitaprajna remains unmoved. Desires may enter, but they merge and vanish within him. He remains free from all disturbances and knows how to keep himself steady in his own knowledge. Only such a calm person attains real peace.

In contrast, a person driven by lust has no end to their desires. As soon as one desire is fulfilled, a new one is born, creating a constant inner void and despair. Life continues this way without ever reaching complete

satisfaction. The fire of unfulfilled desires burns the heart constantly. Such people have no gratitude and find no peace because their desires never end.

Verse 2.71 The person who abandons all desires for sense gratification, who lives without longing, and who is free from the sense of proprietorship and false ego, alone attains real peace.

Verse 2.72 This is the state of God-realization (Brahmi-sthiti), O Partha! Having attained this, one is never again deluded. Being situated in this state even at the hour of death, one attains the Supreme—liberation (Brahma-nirvana).

(Commentary 2.71) What steals peace? The constant thought of sense gratification, the agony of worldly bonds, and the burden of the false ego (Aham). The suffering begins with the thoughts of "I did this" or "This is mine." When these are challenged or opposed, the suffering becomes endless and steals the peace of life.

One who can move through the world with indifference toward sense desires will not be troubled by them. He who can break the bonds of false delusion and become free will be free from agony. Abandoning the sense of "I" and "Mine" leads to true happiness and a free, blissful life. This cannot be achieved without the inspiration of God-

consciousness; thus, one must practice focusing on God through Samadhi. The successful Yogi, free from all bonds, finds satisfaction and peace within.

(Commentary 2.72) Giving up sense desires, breaking the bonds of delusion, or removing the ego from within is no easy task. Realistically, few can do it. Those who can are highly elevated souls—this is why a Yogi is held in such high esteem. Without a spiritual connection to the Supreme, this impossible feat cannot be achieved. A Yogi lives in the constant presence of God.

"...those who are near Him ... they exalt Him night and day and do not flag." (Al-Quran 21:19-20)

The Yogi, free from material bonds, attains infinite joy. This peaceful, happy state is Brahmi-sthiti. In this state, the soul resides in Brahman or God, attaining the nature of the Supreme and experiencing nectar-like bliss. This is called attaining immortality (Gita 2:15).

Upanishadic Brahmanism urges one to stay in this state as the ultimate achievement. Brahman is the impersonal, attribute-less aspect of the Supreme. Being situated here, the modes of material nature cannot affect the being.

Attaining Brahman-knowledge means realizing God in everyone and everyone in God. Seeing the One in all, the

soul feels others' sorrows and joys as its own, and love for all is born. One is inspired to treat everyone equally, as distinctions vanish and equanimity arises. In that inspiration, one works selflessly for the welfare of all.

In this mental state, the individual's own selfish desires are burnt away. There is no longer any personal work; rather, the work of the Supreme is performed through such a person. Selfless action is not merely human; it is Divine. To perform it, one must attain a Divine nature—the Brahma-bhuta state.

Once elevated to this stage, one is never deluded again. The knowledge that brought this peace remains forever. Furthermore, the Yogi realizes there is no higher peace in the three worlds than this. Therefore, they will never risk losing this attained happiness through delusion.

All people in the world, even those who have strayed, are running after a bit of happiness, but they sacrifice secure happiness by running in the wrong direction. Happiness and freedom are within reach, but to achieve them, one must build oneself with a mindset of sacrifice rather than just acquisition.

It is said that even at the final moment of life, if one can stay in this state, they attain Brahma-nirvana (liberation). If Arjuna stays in this knowledge and performs his duty

(the battle), he will achieve Nirvana at the end of his life. Nirvana is the "end of material life," leading to freedom from material bonds and the attainment of the Supreme Abode, never to return to the material world.

"But the chosen servants of Allah ... for them is a known provision ... they will say: 'Now we shall not die (again) ... Indeed, this is the great success.'" (Al-Quran 37:40-60)

Finally, regarding the nature of Brahman: the soul (Jivatma) is a minute part of Brahman. As a particle of gold is still gold, the soul is qualitatively Brahma-bhuta—pure, simple, and blissful. Like a child, it is a source of inspiration. The soul enters the material world with this nature but becomes covered by the three modes of nature (Gunas). It deviates from its true self, which is the loss of its true religion (Dharma). The goal is to break the material bonds and return to one's true nature—attaining the state of Brahman.

Brahman is "Bliss" (Anandamaya). This state of infinite peace and satisfaction is the ultimate desire of all religious paths. Within this bliss lie all the powers of the universe. Three powers work behind this joy:

1. **Power of Action (Kriya-shakti):** The soul is the "doer." Creative power develops through effort (**Action**). There is joy in work.

2. **Power of Knowledge (Jnana-shakti):** The soul is the "knower." Conscious knowledge develops through contemplation (**Thought**). There is infinite joy in knowledge.

3. **Power of Will (Iccha-shakti):** The soul is the "enjoyer." Willpower develops through desire (**Desire**). All joy lies in the fulfillment of the will.

When the power of action reaches its peak, it is called **Power**; the peak of knowledge is **Wisdom**; the peak of will is **Love**.

Through spiritual practice (Sadhana), a being can awaken these powers. Once awakened, the being attains a Divine nature. Three paths (Margas) are specified for this: Karma Yoga, Jnana Yoga, and Bhakti Yoga.

When actions are God-oriented, it is Karma Yoga. When knowledge is God-oriented, it is Jnana Yoga. When joy is God-oriented, it is Bhakti Yoga. Through the full development of these three, a person becomes truly blissful or situated in the Brahma-bhuta state—attaining a nature similar to Brahman, though not equal in magnitude.

Marvelous Gita by AZM Alamgir

Chapter 3: Karma Yoga

(Total Verses: 43)

Summary: Upon inspecting the battlefield, Arjuna is overwhelmed by grief. With the desire to attain liberation from the miseries of the material world, he wishes to renounce action and embrace the life of a sannyasi (monk). However, the truth is that freedom from action (naishkarmya) is not achieved by merely abstaining from work, nor is perfection attained through renunciation alone.

To be free from the sufferings and bonds of the world, one must perform action. One must attain the state of actionless-ness through the performance of action. It is essential to understand which actions should be

performed and how they should be performed. Therefore, the path is not sannyasa or the abandonment of action; Arjuna must perform his duty, which is to fight. One must act with the knowledge that keeps one free from sin and leads to liberation from bondage. This chapter discusses that specific knowledge.

Verses and Commentary

Verse 3.1 Arjuna said: If you consider intelligence superior to action, O Janardana, then why do you urge me to engage in such a terrible deed, O Keshava?

Verse 3.2 My intelligence is bewildered by your seemingly ambiguous words. Please tell me with certainty the one path by which I may attain the highest benefit.

(Commentary 3.1-2) Arjuna asks Krishna: If, in your opinion, "intelligence" (buddhi) is superior to "action" (karma), then why are you urging me to engage in a ghastly act like war? Here, "action" refers specifically to the Vedic path of rituals, desire-driven actions (sakama karma), or fruitive work. "Intelligence" refers to Buddhi-yoga or Karma-yoga, which is selfless action (nishkama karma).

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In the Vedic path of action, sacrifices (yajna) are performed with the desire for worldly opulence or heavenly realms. Generally, any action is considered "desire-driven" because one expects to enjoy the results. The enjoyment of results is the motivation for such work. War, in a general sense, is also included in desire-driven action because by winning a war, people gain power and wish to enjoy royal pleasures.

Arjuna has been maintaining from the beginning that he is unwilling to engage in a war that destroys dynasties. Instead, he considers it better to live like a beggar and practice the religion of renunciation (sannyasa) by abandoning all actions. Even if it were profitable, he is unwilling to engage in a war of such a low, destructive nature.

Sri Krishna has previously inspired Arjuna to act selflessly through Buddhi-yoga, as selfless action leads to salvation (moksha), the attainment of the state of Brahman (Brahmi-sthiti), and peace and happiness. Yet, He is also encouraging Arjuna to fight, which is categorized as fruitive action. If intelligence is superior to action, why is He engaging him in such a terrible deed?

Krishna advises selfless action at one point and then encourages fruitive action at another. Arjuna becomes confused by Krishna's seemingly contradictory words.

He wants to know with certainty about the one path that, if followed, will bring him true welfare. Sri Krishna replies:

Verse 3.3 O sinless one! As I have stated before, there are two paths of spiritual practice in this world for attaining the ultimate goal: the path of knowledge (Jnana-yoga) for the contemplative thinkers (Sankhyas) and the path of selfless action (Karma-yoga) for the yogis.

Verse 3.4 A person does not attain freedom from action (naishkarmya) simply by abstaining from work, nor does one attain perfection merely through renunciation.

Verse 3.5 Indeed, no one can remain without performing action even for a moment. Everyone is helplessly driven to act by the qualities (gunas) born of material nature.

(Commentary 3.3) Sri Krishna explains that the true goal of life is to become free from the bondage of action and material nature. To attain salvation or liberation, there are two paths of practice. The Sankhyas (philosophers) strive to reach the goal through analytical study, relying on their own knowledge and intellect.

Yogis, believing in the Supreme Lord as the cause of all causes, strive to reach the goal through the performance of action. This latter path is considered higher and more pleasing to the Supreme. He loves those who place their

trust and dependence upon Him. As it is said:

"Allah loves those who put their trust in Him." (Al-Quran 3:159)

(Commentary 3.4) Arjuna, burnt by grief and agony, considers embracing sannyasa (renunciation) by abandoning all work. Renunciation is the path of Sankhya or knowledge. Krishna explains that perfection is not attained by mere abandonment of work. Without performing action, one cannot reach the state of "actionless-ness" (naishkarmya), and without that state, liberation is impossible.

Naishkarmya is a state of being where, even while performing work, one feels as though no action is being done. Such actions do not produce any karmic results. Therefore, whether one follows the path of knowledge or yoga, one must act to achieve perfection.

(Commentary 3.5) Krishna states that, let alone perfection, no one can stay completely idle even for a second. Whether consciously or unconsciously, every living being is engaged in action at every moment.

When someone thinks they are not working, their body is still functioning—the brain is active, and involuntary organs are working. Even sleep is an act. Even if the body is still, the soul acts. The nature of the soul is to be

constantly active. As it is said:

"Every day He is engaged in some affair." (Al-Quran 55:29)

Even if a person does not wish to act, they are helplessly forced to do so by the promptings of external nature. The body is compelled to react to external stimuli according to its disposition. As long as there is life, action is mandatory. Since action is unavoidable, one should act in a way that is favorable to attaining liberation. Krishna says:

Verse 3.6 One who restrains the senses of action but whose mind dwells on sense objects is certainly a deluded soul and is called a pretender.

Verse 3.7 On the other hand, O Arjuna, he is far superior who restrains the senses with the mind and engages the active senses in selfless service (Karma-yoga) without attachment.

(Commentary 3.6-7) Arjuna wanted to renounce action to escape worldly misery. Krishna points out that if someone abandons work but continues to dwell on sense objects in their mind, the same problem remains. Attachment to objects will continue to cause agony, and liberation will not be attained. Mere physical renunciation is a path of delusion.

It is taught that while restraining the senses through the mind, one must engage the senses in work without attachment. When the senses are busy with work, they find no opportunity to indulge in sense objects or useless fantasies. This keeps the consciousness clean and makes sense control easier. Therefore, action—not renunciation—is the proper means of liberation. But which action is "proper"? Krishna explains:

Verse 3.8 Perform your prescribed duty, for action is certainly better than inaction. One cannot even maintain one's physical body without work.

Verse 3.9 Work must be done as a sacrifice (yajna) for Vishnu, otherwise work causes bondage in this material world. Therefore, O son of Kunti, perform your prescribed duties for His satisfaction, and in that way, you will always remain free from attachment and bondage.

(Commentary 3.8) If renouncing action were the right path to liberation and everyone followed it, how would creation survive? Work is better than inaction. Even to keep the body healthy, one must work. Therefore, there is no alternative to action. The question is: which action?

Arjuna is in a dilemma. In the Bible, it is said that after Solomon attained the throne, God appeared in his dream and asked him what he wanted. Solomon asked for

neither wealth nor power, but for **Wisdom**—the knowledge to discern between good and evil. God was pleased and gave him both wisdom and wealth. The Quran quotes:

"And We gave Sulaiman (Solomon) the right understanding of the matter..." (Al-Quran 21:79)

Determining the difference between "Action" (Karma), "Inaction" (Akarma), and "Forbidden Action" (Vikarma) is often confusing. People can mistakenly view bad actions as right because of self-interest. Duryodhana and his allies also believed they were doing their "duty" from their perspective.

Krishna advises: follow the injunctions of the scriptures. Humans often see good as bad or bad as good based on personal benefit, but scriptural laws come from the Divine for the welfare of all creation. As it is said:

"Say, 'Indeed, Allah does not order immorality.' ... Say, 'My Lord has ordered justice...'" (Al-Quran 7:28-29)

Krishna tells Arjuna to fight for justice as a Kshatriya (warrior) according to scriptural law. That is his highest duty.

(Commentary 3.9) People usually work to get something or enjoy the fruits. This desire for results causes bondage.

Thus, Krishna advises working selflessly (nishkama).

Renouncing the desire for results is difficult. Desire is the fuel that usually motivates humans to work. To work selflessly, one needs a higher inspiration: The Supreme Lord! Only by taking shelter in Him is it possible to work while renouncing everything else. This requires firm faith and devotion. As it is said:

"For each there are degrees (of reward) according to what they did. And your Lord is not unaware of what they do." (Al-Quran 6:132)

Arjuna must fight not for personal gain, but for the sake of the Lord and the protection of creation. This is the "Art of Action." Yoga is skill in action.

In the Gita, Yajna (sacrifice) means sacrifice or offering for the sake of God. Any work dedicated to the Lord becomes a Yajna.

"Say: 'Truly, my prayer and my service of sacrifice, my life and my death, are (all) for Allah, the Cherisher of the Worlds.'" (Al-Quran 6:162)

Whoever violates this law of sacrifice will never find true peace and will be bound by the misery of the world. Krishna then explains how this system was established:

Verse 3.10 In the beginning of creation, the Lord of all

creatures (Prajapati) sent forth generations of men and demigods, along with sacrifices for Vishnu, and blessed them by saying, "Be thou happy by this Yajna (sacrifice) because its performance will bestow upon you everything desirable."

(Commentary 3.10) Krishna explains the philosophy behind sacrifice. Prajapati (Brahma) created all beings along with the system of sacrifice and said, "Through this sacrifice, may you prosper. Let this sacrifice fulfill your cherished goals."

Sacrifice is the law that protects society and creation. By pleasing the Supreme through Yajna, the consciousness of the people is elevated. While the Vedas mention sacrifices for material desires (sakama), the Gita emphasizes Yajna for liberation (nishkama). Returning to the original source is the goal.

"To Allah is your return..." (Al-Quran 11:4)

Verse 3.11 By these sacrifices, please the demigods, and the demigods will please you. By this mutual cooperation, you will attain the highest welfare.

Verse 3.12 In charge of the various necessities of life, the demigods, being satisfied by the performance of Yajna, will supply all necessities to you. But he who enjoys these gifts without offering them to the demigods in return is

certainly a thief.

Verse 3.13 The devotees of the Lord are released from all kinds of sins because they eat food which is offered first for sacrifice. Others, who prepare food for personal sense enjoyment, verily eat only sin.

(Commentary 3.11-13) Everything essential for survival—light, air, water—comes from God. Humans create nothing. The Quran lists these blessings (Al-Quran 56:58-72).

In this world, the Lord assigns duties to various administrative demigods (similar to the roles of Angels like Jibril or Mikail in Islamic philosophy). When sacrifices are made, these administrative powers are satisfied and provide natural abundance.

The duty of man is to express gratitude. One who enjoys God's gifts without acknowledging Him is acting as a "thief."

"If you are grateful, I will surely increase you [in favor]..." (Al-Quran 14:7)

Eating food after offering it to the Creator purifies the body and mind. It removes the sinful tendency of the heart. The ultimate purpose of Yajna is to transcend the material level and reach the transcendental stage.

Marvelous Gita by AZM Alamgir

Verse 3.14 All living bodies subsist on food grains, which are produced from rains. Rains are produced by performance of Yajna (sacrifice), and Yajna is born of prescribed duties.

Verse 3.15 Regulated activities are prescribed in the Vedas, and the Vedas are directly manifested from the Supreme Lord (Akshara). Therefore the all-pervading Transcendence is eternally situated in acts of sacrifice.

Verse 3.16 My dear Arjuna, one who does not follow this cycle thus established by the Lord certainly leads a life full of sin. Living only for the satisfaction of the senses, such a person lives in vain.

(Commentary 3.14-16) This describes the "Cycle of Sacrifice" (Yajna-chakra). Food comes from rain, rain from sacrifice, and sacrifice from duty. Duties are born from Brahman (the Vedas), and Brahman originates from the Imperishable (Akshara), the Supreme Lord.

This cycle sustains the universe. One who does not participate in this cycle but lives only for sensory pleasure is disconnected from the Creator. Such a life is a "life in vain" and is considered "sinful" because it involves taking from the creation without giving back—a form of spiritual theft.

Performing sacrifice also helps those who are deeply

bound to the material world to slowly develop devotion. It involves spending one's resources for the Lord, which is a form of sacrifice. As it is said:

"Never will you attain the good [reward] until you spend [in the way of Allah] from that which you love." (Al-Quran 3:92)

However, there are some people who are beyond the necessity of such prescribed duties. Who are they? Krishna explains:

Verse 3.17 But for one who takes delight in the Self (**Atma**), who is satisfied within the Self, and who is perfectly content in the Self alone, for such a person, there is no obligatory duty to perform.

Verse 3.18 In this world, such a person has nothing to gain by performing actions, nor is there any reason to lose anything by not performing them. To fulfill any need, they do not depend on any other living being.

Verse 3.19 Therefore, always perform your prescribed duties without attachment, for by working without attachment, a person attains the Supreme goal.

(Commentary 3.17-19) For one who is delighted and satisfied within their own soul and does not need to rely on anyone else to fulfill their needs, there are no

mandatory duties. Such a person does not even need to perform the Vedic sacrifices (**Yajna**) because: first, they have no desires; and second, they have already attained the goal for which those sacrifices are performed.

Humans usually act to satisfy themselves, but one who has found contentment within does not need to act for gain. By the grace of God (Allah), they are self-illuminated, and their duties are determined by that internal light. Such liberated souls gain nothing by action and lose nothing by inaction. They may act voluntarily for the welfare of the world and the maintenance of creation. This is known as serving God or performing one's duty toward Allah. Krishna tells Arjuna that by working with this mindset—performing duty as a necessity without attachment—the Supreme goal is reached.

Verse 3.20 Kings like **Janaka** attained perfection solely through the performance of action. Therefore, even for the sake of maintaining the world, you should perform your duty.

Verse 3.21 Whatever a great person does, common people follow. Whatever standards they set by their exemplary acts, all the world pursues.

(Commentary 3.20-21) King Janaka (father of Sita and

father-in-law of Sri Rama) was the King of Mithila. He was a great spiritual Knower. He attained perfection—the realization of the Supreme Soul—through devotion and action. Although he was not bound by scriptural obligations, he continued to perform Vedic rituals to set an example for the common people and to protect the order of creation.

Krishna explains to Arjuna that leaders must set good examples. If a great personality like Arjuna abandons his duty, others will follow that path, leading to chaos and a "bad example" in the world. To suppress the wicked, establish truth, and protect creation, war is sometimes necessary. This is the context of Kurukshetra. As it is said:

"I hurl the Truth against falsehood, and it knocks out its brain, and behold, falsehood perishes!" (Al-Quran 21:18)

"And if Allah did not check one set of people by means of another, the earth would indeed be full of mischief. But Allah is full of bounty to the worlds." (Al-Quran 2:251)

Verse 3.22 O Partha (Arjuna)! In all the three worlds, there is no duty for Me to perform, nor is there anything for Me to obtain that I do not already have. Yet, I am constantly engaged in action.

Verse 3.23 For, if I ever failed to engage in action tirelessly, O Partha, certainly all men would follow My

path in every way.

Verse 3.24 If I should cease to work, all these worlds would fall into ruin. I would be the cause of creating unwanted population (**varna-sankara**), and I would thereby destroy the peace of all living beings.

(Commentary 3.22-24) God is beyond the three modes of nature (**Gunatita**). He has no desires and nothing to achieve, yet He remains active. As it is said:

"Every day He is engaged in some affair." (Al-Quran 55:29)

If God stopped working, humans would follow that example and abandon their responsibilities, leading to social collapse, unwanted offspring, and the destruction of the world's order. For the sake of the universe, He remains engaged in action.

Verse 3.25 As the ignorant perform their duties with attachment to results, O Bharat (Arjuna), so should the wise act without attachment, for the sake of leading people on the right path.

Verse 3.26 The wise should not unsettle the minds of the ignorant who are attached to the fruits of their actions. Instead, by performing their own duties in a disciplined way, they should encourage others to engage in all

activities.

(Commentary 3.25-26) The difference between a wise devotee and an ignorant person is their "intent." Both may look like they are doing the same work, but the ignorant person acts for sensory pleasure and personal gain, while the wise person acts for the satisfaction of God and the protection of the world.

The wise should not confuse those with less understanding by speaking of high philosophy that might make them abandon work. Instead, the wise should lead by doing. Forcing high knowledge on someone who cannot grasp it may lead to misunderstanding or even social unrest. As it is said:

"You can only warn him who follows the Reminder..." (Al-Quran 36:11)

Verse 3.27 All actions are performed by the modes (**gunas**) of material nature. But the soul, deluded by ego, thinks, "I am the doer."

Verse 3.28 O mighty-armed one! He who knows the truth about the modes of nature and their actions does not become attached, knowing that it is only the modes (senses) interacting with the modes (sense objects).

Verse 3.29 Deluded by the modes of material nature, the

ignorant become attached to material activities. Although these tasks may be inferior, the wise should not disturb those of shallow understanding.

(Commentary 3.27-29) Everything the body does is driven by nature and its three qualities (**Sattva, Rajas, Tamas**). The soul and the body are different. The body reacts according to its nature, but the ego-driven soul mistakenly takes credit for these actions, leading to pride or despair.

The reality is that God controls nature. As it is said:

"Indeed, I have created man in a state of struggle... does he think that no one has power over him?" (Al-Quran 90:4-5)

The wise realize that the senses are merely interacting with sense objects—it is a physical process where the soul is just a witness. Because they don't say "I am the doer," they aren't bound by the results of the work. When the "I" disappears, the soul surrenders to the Supreme. Then, God's work is done through them, and no sin touches them. As it is said:

"It was not you who killed them, but it was Allah who killed them." (Al-Quran 8:17)

Krishna tells Arjuna that ignorant people, lacking this

knowledge, get heavily involved and bound by their work. The wise should let them progress at their own pace rather than causing confusion.

Verse 3.30 Therefore, surrendering all your works unto Me, with your mind intent on the Self, free from desire and ego, and without mental fever (lethargy/grief)—fight!

Verse 3.31 Those who constantly follow My teachings with faith and without envy are also released from the bondage of actions.

Verse 3.32 But those who, out of envy, do not follow My teachings and disregard them are to be considered bereft of all knowledge, befooled, and ruined in their endeavors for perfection.

(Commentary 3.30-32) Krishna tells Arjuna to surrender everything to Him. Understand the relationship between the soul and the Creator. Once you realize nothing belongs to you—not even your life—you can act for God's sake without ego or grief. Arjuna is just an instrument in a larger divine plan. As it is said:

"Who is it that sustains and regulates all affairs? ... Will you not then fulfill your duty toward Him?" (Al-Quran 10:31)

By working in this state of surrender, one remains free from sin.

"Indeed, the religion in the sight of Allah is 'Al-Islam' (submission to His will)." (Al-Quran 3:19)

Those who are cynical or envious of this teaching and prefer to invent their own paths (like false renunciation) end up lost. Regarding self-invented monasticism/renunciation, the Quran says:

"...and as for monasticism, they innovated it—We did not prescribe it for them... but they did not observe it with right observance." (Al-Quran 57:27)

One does not need to abandon work; one only needs to abandon the **desire for the fruits** of work. This maintains the "Cycle of Sacrifice" and fulfills one's duty.

Sri Krishna has shown such a wonderful philosophy, yet why does everyone not follow this path? It is said:

Verse 3.33 Even a person of knowledge acts according to his own nature. All living beings follow their nature; what can repression accomplish?

Verse 3.34 The senses experience attachment and aversion toward their respective objects. One should not come under their sway, for they are certainly stumbling blocks.

(Commentary 3.33) It is explained that everyone acts according to their inherent nature. Whether **Sattva**

(goodness), **Rajas** (passion), or **Tamas** (ignorance) dominates, a person acts accordingly. Everyone follows their nature; no one can truly repress themselves. Even a wise person reacts under the influence of the modes of nature. Unless one rises above these three modes, one cannot remain neutral and judge good or evil correctly. Why does this happen?

(Commentary 3.34) This happens because of the senses. When senses encounter objects, "attachment" (**raga**) and "aversion" (**dvesha**) arise. Attachment is the attraction to favorable things, and aversion is the dislike for unfavorable things. Based on their nature, every living being reacts differently to sense objects. Therefore, they cannot judge things neutrally. Attachment and aversion are obstacles on the right path. One should not be controlled by them; they must be subdued. However, subduing them is difficult.

Because they cannot subdue these impulses while staying in their own duty (**Svadharma**), many try to follow another's path (**Paradharma**) thinking it is easier—just as Arjuna wanted to take up renunciation. But Sri Krishna says:

Verse 3.35 It is far better to perform one's own prescribed duty, even if faulty, than another's duty performed perfectly. Death in the performance of one's

own duty is better; following another's path is dangerous.

(Commentary 3.35) Svadharma is the work born of one's own nature—what the body and mind are naturally inclined to do. A person cannot easily go against their nature; doing so feels uncomfortable and the work is not performed well. Even if someone performs another's task perfectly, it is considered an exception, not the rule.

In the specific context of Arjuna, this refers to **Varnasrama-dharma** (social duties). A Brahmin, a Kshatriya, a Vaishya, or a Shudra must perform the duty assigned to them. Arjuna is a **Kshatriya** (warrior). His natural duty is to fight. A Brahmin is naturally non-violent and situated in **Sattva** (goodness). Non-violence is not Arjuna's natural path of action at this moment, yet he wished to abandon his duty for a life of renunciation.

Sri Krishna says it is better to die performing one's own duty with honor than to adopt a path that doesn't belong to you. A warrior is built to fight for a cause. Abandoning duty in a crisis is considered a sin. Following another's path is dangerous because it can lead to failure and social instability.

However, one who has risen above the three modes of nature (**Gunatita**) can behave in any way, as they are no longer driven by material qualities or self-interest. They

act solely for the welfare of the world or by Divine command.

If following one's nature is so important, why do people still stray into the path of sin? Arjuna asks:

Verse 3.36 O descendant of Vrishni (Krishna)! By what is a man impelled to commit sinful acts, even against his will, as if constrained by force?

Verse 3.37 Sri Krishna says: It is lust (**Kama**) and anger (**Krodha**), born of the mode of passion (**Rajas**). Know this to be the all-devouring, sinful enemy of this world.

(Commentary 3.36-37) Arjuna asks: why does a person engage in sinful acts even when they don't want to? It feels as if some external force is dragging them down.

Krishna identifies the enemies: **Lust** and **Anger**, born of the mode of passion (**Rajo-guna**). When lust is unfulfilled, it turns into anger, which is even more dangerous. Lust here isn't just sexual; it refers to the general "desire" for material enjoyment.

There are six internal enemies: Lust (**Kama**), Anger (**Krodha**), Greed (**Lobha**), Delusion (**Moha**), Pride (**Mada**), and Envy (**Matsarya**). All of these originate from Lust. When desire becomes excessive, it turns into greed. When desire clouds the intellect, it becomes delusion.

When ignorance leads to ego, it becomes pride. When that ego compares itself to others, it becomes envy. Lust is the root enemy that destroys everything. As it is said:

Verse 3.38 As fire is covered by smoke, as a mirror is covered by dust, or as the embryo is covered by the womb, so is the soul's knowledge covered by this lust.

Verse 3.39 Thus, the wise living entity's pure consciousness is covered by his eternal enemy in the shape of lust, O son of Kunti (Arjuna), which is never satisfied and which burns like fire.

(Commentary 3.38-39) The pure consciousness of the soul is covered by lust, much like rust covers iron or clouds cover the sun. This lust, born of passion, never reaches satisfaction through enjoyment. It provides a moment of pleasure but then wakes up even stronger, burning like fire and keeping the soul bound to the material world. To destroy this enemy, one must find where it lives. Krishna says:

Verse 3.40 The senses, the mind, and the intelligence are said to be the sitting places of this lust. Through them, lust covers the real knowledge of the living entity and bewilders him.

Verse 3.41 Therefore, O best of the Bharatas! Curb the senses first; and slay this sinful destroyer of knowledge

and self-realization.

(Commentary 3.40) Lust resides in the senses, the mind, and the intelligence. The senses encounter an object first and send the signal inside. This agitates the mind. The mind then creates a resolve to obtain that object. This agitation bewilders the intelligence. Once intelligence is lost, pure consciousness is covered, and the soul loses its way.

(Commentary 3.41) The way out is through scientific and spiritual knowledge. But how can knowledge lead the way if it is covered? One must first calm the mind by controlling the senses. If the senses are restrained, the "input" for lust is cut off.

"Evil and good are not equal, even though the abundance of evil may dazzle you. So fear Allah, O people of understanding, that you may be successful." (Al-Quran 5:100)

"But as for him who feared standing before his Lord and restrained himself from impure evil desires, surely Paradise will be his refuge." (Al-Quran 79:40-41)

All scriptures encourage avoiding evil deeds. The Gita, however, analyzes this process with deep psychological science. To destroy lust, one must subdue the senses. But how can we control the mind and senses? Krishna

explains the hierarchy:

Verse 3.42 The senses are said to be superior to the body; the mind is superior to the senses; the intelligence is superior to the mind; and that which is even higher than the intelligence is the **Self** (the Soul).

Verse 3.43 O mighty-armed Arjuna! Knowing the soul to be superior to the intelligence, steady the mind by the higher Self and conquer this insatiable enemy known as lust.

(Commentary 3.42) The physical body is inert and has no judgment. The senses are superior to the body because they act as the gateways of perception. The mind is superior to the senses because it coordinates all sensory input and generates desires. The intelligence (**Buddhi**) is superior to the mind because it is the faculty of judgment and decision-making. But the Soul (**Atma**) is the highest. It is the "Self" that gives life to everything else.

(Commentary 3.43) Lust is a formidable enemy that bewilders the intellect and causes the soul to fall. To control it, one must use a higher power to control a lower power. Krishna advises using the power of the Self (the Soul) to steady the mind.

"He has succeeded who purifies the soul, and he has

failed who stifles it." (Al-Quran 91:9-10)

Lust is an expression of **Rajas**. If left unchecked, it turns into anger, which is an expression of **Tamas** (darkness/destruction). One must pull oneself from passion and ignorance into **Sattva** (goodness).

This is an internal war—a "Jihad" of the heart. There is a Kurukshetra inside everyone. To win, the soul must be awakened through a connection with the Supreme Soul (**Paramatma**). A soul that remembers God becomes strong enough to conquer the impossible.

"...establish prayer for My remembrance." (Al-Quran 20:14)

"...and the remembrance of Allah is greatest." (Al-Quran 29:45)

Lust and anger are great powers, like fire or atomic energy. If used for the ego, they destroy. If transformed through intelligence into Divine Love, they lead to liberation.

Marvelous Gita by AZM Alamgir

Chapter 4: Jnana Yoga

(The Yoga of Knowledge)

(Total Verses: 42)

Arjuna initially sought renunciation (Sannyasa) as a means to escape the miseries of the world. However, true liberation from suffering does not come through mere withdrawal; it comes from being freed from the bondage of actions. This is the true goal of life. One does not need to abandon work; it is possible to achieve this goal while being active. Those who possess knowledge of God and understand His divine nature know the process of becoming free from worldly ties. Through action and spiritual practice, they attain God. Attaining God ends all suffering and leads to a life of supreme peace and bliss,

known as the **Brahmi-state**. Therefore, God is the ultimate goal.

Verses and Commentary

Verse 4.1 The Blessed Lord said: I taught this imperishable science of Yoga to the Sun-god, Vivasvan; Vivasvan taught it to Manu, the father of mankind, and Manu taught it to Ikshvaku.

Verse 4.2 O subduer of enemies! This supreme science was thus received through the chain of disciplic succession, and the saintly kings understood it in that way. But in the course of time, the succession was broken, and therefore the science as it is appears to be lost.

Verse 4.3 That same ancient Yoga is today declared by Me to you because you are My devotee as well as My friend; therefore, you can understand the transcendental mystery of this science.

(Commentary 4.1-3) The word "Yoga" has many meanings; it refers to the method, technique, or process of spiritual practice. Karma Yoga, Dhyana Yoga, Jnana Yoga, and Bhakti Yoga are specific scientific methods to attain God or establish a relationship with the Supreme.

This knowledge helps a living being realize their true nature. The word Yoga is also used to describe God's creative power, referred to in Vedanta as **Maya**.

This Yoga is called "imperishable" because there is no failure in this path; once started, it leads toward completion and cannot be destroyed. Krishna provides a brief history of how this knowledge descended to Earth and how it became forgotten.

The Supreme Lord governs the universe and originally gave this knowledge to the rulers of the planets so they could maintain their connection with Him. These saintly kings then passed the knowledge to the common people so that everyone could be freed from material desires, understand the purpose of life, and progress spiritually while constantly remembering God.

Vivasvan refers to the Sun-god, the ruler of the solar planet. The Sun-god taught his son **Manu**, and Manu taught his son **Ikshvaku**, the progenitor of the Raghu dynasty (in which Lord Rama appeared 58 generations later). This knowledge has existed in human society since the time of Ikshvaku. However, over a long period, the chain of succession was broken, and the science was nearly lost. Krishna is now reviving this "confidential" or "secret" knowledge for His friend Arjuna because it

contains the absolute truth about Brahman, which is beyond ordinary understanding and leads to true liberation.

Verse 4.4 Arjuna said: Vivasvan was born much earlier, and Your birth is recent. How am I to understand that in the beginning You taught this science to him?

Verse 4.5 The Blessed Lord said: Many, many births both you and I have passed. I can remember all of them, but you cannot, O subduer of the enemy!

(Commentary 4.4-5) Vivasvan was born ages ago, while Krishna appeared recently in the house of Vasudeva. Arjuna asks how it is possible for Krishna to have taught the Sun-god. Krishna explains that both have had many births, but while Arjuna has forgotten his, Krishna—as the Supreme—remembers everything. The soul is eternal and migrates from body to body, but common beings lose their memory due to ignorance. God, appearing in His original form, remains untouched by such ignorance.

Verse 4.6 Although I am unborn and My transcendental body never deteriorates, and although I am the Lord of all living entities, I still appear in every millennium in My original transcendental form by My own internal potency.

Verse 4.7 Whenever and wherever there is a decline in

religious practice, O descendant of Bharata, and a predominant rise of irreligion—at that time I descend Myself.

Verse 4.8 To deliver the pious and to annihilate the miscreants, as well as to reestablish the principles of religion, I Myself appear, millennium after millennium.

(Commentary 4.6-8) God does not "take birth" like a human; He is eternally present. He is the Lord and sustainer of all. He appears in the world through His own creative mystery (**Maya**) in His transcendental form, unaffected by the modes of material nature. As it is said:

"Allah... begets not, nor was He begotten." (Al-Quran 112:3)

When irreligion rises, injustice increases, and following the path of truth becomes difficult, He manifests Himself. This manifestation also happens within the heart of a devotee who is desperate to find the Supreme. God can descend in any form or place according to His will, or He may send a representative.

"He chooses for His Message whom He wills." (Al-Quran 3:179)

"To Allah belongs the sovereignty of the heavens and the

earth, and Allah is over all things competent." (Al-Quran 3:189)

The purpose of His descent is twofold: personal spiritual upliftment of individuals and the re-establishment of social order and peace.

"Had there been upon the earth angels walking securely, We would have sent down to them from the heaven an angel as a messenger." (Al-Quran 17:95)

Verse 4.9 One who knows the transcendental nature of My appearance and activities does not, upon leaving the body, take his birth again in this material world, but attains My eternal abode, O Arjuna.

Verse 4.10 Being freed from attachment, fear, and anger, being fully absorbed in Me and taking refuge in Me, many, many persons in the past became purified by knowledge of Me—and thus they all attained transcendental love for Me.

Verse 4.11 As all surrender unto Me, I reward them accordingly. Everyone follows My path in all respects, O son of Pritha.

Verse 4.12 Men in this world desire success in fruitive activities, and therefore they worship the demigods. Quickly, of course, does success come from fruitive work

in this human world.

(Commentary 4.9) Whoever truly understands God's divine birth and actions attains liberation and does not return to the cycle of rebirth. To attain God, one must first know Him—His qualities, nature, and deeds. One must practice to embody those qualities. Attaining God's nature is the same as attaining Him.

(Commentary 4.10) To attain a quality of God, one must focus on it with a steady mind. One must meditate on His works. This includes scientific inquiry, as science seeks to understand the laws and nature of God's creation. However, attachment to worldly things, fear, and anger prevent this focus. By taking refuge in God, fear vanishes and courage takes its place.

"Say: I seek refuge in the Lord of mankind, the King of mankind, the God of mankind..." (Al-Quran 114:1-5)

Faith is the most important factor; all spiritual formulas require a foundation of firm belief. Many in the past have reached this state of purity through the "penance of knowledge."

(Commentary 4.11) God's forms, qualities, and powers are infinite. Whatever action a being performs or whatever knowledge they seek, the source is God. This verse means that God rewards a person according to the

way they seek Him. Whatever specific quality or power a person strives for from His infinite treasury, they receive it. God knows the intent of the heart.

This striving is the true expression of prayer. If someone works to develop strength, courage, or a specific skill, they are essentially "worshipping" that aspect of the Divine, and they are rewarded with progress in that direction. Whether one seeks worldly gain or spiritual liberation, they are following a path that ultimately originates in God.

"Whoever desires the quick-passing (transitory world), We readily grant of it what We will for whom We like... And whoever desires the Hereafter and strives for it as it should be striven for... their striving shall be thanked." (Al-Quran 17:18-19)

"Every person will be rewarded for what they have earned." (Al-Quran 52:21)

For those who surrender completely, God takes charge of their life, acting like a charioteer (as Krishna does for Arjuna). He guides them from within, showing them what to do and how to do it.

"Indeed, [O Muhammad], you do not guide whom you like, but Allah guides whom He wills." (Al-Quran 28:56)

Ultimately, all paths lead to Him.

"To Him has submitted whatever is in the heavens and earth, willingly or by compulsion." (Al-Quran 3:83)

(Commentary 4.12) Why do some worship demigods instead of the Supreme? Most people are more interested in immediate wealth, children, and power than in attaining God. They lack the patience for long-term spiritual practice and want quick results.

"Nay, but you love the present life, and leave alone the Hereafter." (Al-Quran 75:20-21)

"And indeed, he is intense in the love of wealth." (Al-Quran 100:8)

Demigods are not "forms" of God, but powerful beings or historical figures within the material world who serve under God's direction.

"Those whom they call upon, they themselves seek the means of access to their Lord." (Al-Quran 17:57)

"To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and the earth. All are obedient to Him." (Al-Quran 30:25-26)

In modern terms, people might "worship" political leaders or powerful figures to get quick favors. This is "demigod worship" for immediate worldly gain. While the Vedas

provide rituals for satisfying these powers, the ultimate purpose is to lead everyone to the One Supreme.

"And your God is one God. There is no deity [worthy of worship] except Him, the Entirely Merciful, the Especially Merciful." (Al-Quran 2:163)

"Allah witnesses that there is no deity except Him, and [so do] the angels and those of knowledge..." (Al-Quran 3:18)

God resides in everyone's heart, and He strengthens the faith of a person in whatever direction they choose to go. Ultimately, one must awaken themselves.

"Surely Allah helps those who help themselves." (Al-Quran 22:40)

Verse 4.13 The four divisions of human society were created by Me according to the three modes of material nature and the work associated with them. And although I am the creator of this system, you should know that I am yet the nondoer, being unchangeable.

(Commentary 4.13) It was mentioned earlier that the Vedas provide various prescriptions for worship based on human nature. Here, the different types of human nature are discussed.

It is said that God divided human beings into four types based on their qualities (**Gunas**) and actions (**Karma**).

Based on this, four varnas (orders) were created in society: Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya, and Shudra.

- The highest level of society is formed by people with superior intelligence, known as **Brahmins**. They are influenced by Sattva-guna (goodness) and pursue knowledge.
- The next level is the administrative or warrior community, called **Kshatriyas**, influenced by Rajo-guna (passion).
- The following level is the mercantile community, called **Vaishyas**, influenced by a mixture of Rajas and Tamas.
- Finally, the **Shudras** or the laboring class, who are influenced by Tamo-guna (ignorance).

Each must achieve perfection by serving or worshipping God according to their specific nature. As it is said:

"For all there are degrees (or ranks) according to what they did. And your Lord is not unaware of what they do." (Al-Quran 6:132)

Notably, although God created this fourfold system, He Himself is not part of these divisions. He is infallible and unchangeable, so He does not fall into any classification. He is complete. The modes of Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas do not affect Him; He is beyond the gunas. Therefore, He is not bound.

Man must understand these divine aspects. By acquiring similar qualities, one must attain the "state of God." The seeker of liberation must know God for this reason. The next step in human life is attaining **Brahman-hood**. Brahman is the attributeless (Nirguna) state of God. Man must rise to that level to achieve liberation. If one understands God's nature and characteristics, they can set it as a goal and strive to ascend. This is why the concept of God is central to **Jnana Yoga**. God is the ultimate goal.

"And that to your Lord is the finality (the ultimate goal)." (Al-Quran 53:42)

Verse 4.14 There is no work that affects Me; nor do I aspire to the fruits of action. One who understands this truth about Me also does not become entangled in the fruitive reactions of work.

Verse 4.15 All the liberated souls in ancient times acted with this understanding of My transcendental nature. Therefore, you should perform your duty, following in their footsteps.

(Commentary 4.14) In their true essence, the individual soul (**Jivatma**) is also Brahman-like, endowed with Godly qualities. However, upon contact with material nature, their true knowledge is covered by ignorance due to the

influence of the three modes, causing them to deviate from their true nature.

Conversely, God is beyond the gunas. The three modes of nature cannot affect Him. Thus, He is not bound by the bondage of action. He has no desire for the results of action, nor does He need them. He is free from such attractions and is perfectly independent.

Every human is given certain tasks and responsibilities by the Creator. That is why He created mankind; otherwise, He could have kept them in heaven or not created them at all. Therefore, assigned duties must be performed. Herein lies the problem: whenever a human acts, a desire for the fruit of that action arises. From this desire to enjoy results, man becomes entangled in the bondage of actions in the material world, like being stuck with glue. This may bring some temporary pleasure, but it is the root of all suffering.

To be free from bondage, one must gain knowledge of God and His nature. One must return to their true self. He is the goal. One who understands this "Tattva" (Truth) knows the process of being free from bondage. However, merely knowing the theory is not enough; one must internalize this knowledge with faith and practice it with intensity. Action or spiritual practice (**Sadhana**) is crucial.

(Commentary 4.15) Those who sought liberation from the bondage of action in the past succeeded by acting with this knowledge. Krishna advises Arjuna to perform his duty—his "Svadharma"—just as the predecessors did. He is not telling Arjuna to abandon his duty or the battlefield to become a conventional sanyasi, but to work without ego, established in the knowledge of God as the "non-doer." Not the renunciation of action, but action itself can properly liberate a being from this miserable world. But what is action, and what is inaction?

Verse 4.16 Even the intelligent are bewildered in determining what is action and what is inaction. Now I shall explain to you what action is, knowing which you shall be liberated from all misfortune.

Verse 4.17 The intricacies of action are very hard to understand. Therefore, one should know properly what action is, what forbidden action is, and what inaction is.

Verse 4.18 One who sees inaction in action, and action in inaction, is intelligent among men, and he is in the transcendental position, although engaged in all sorts of activities.

(Commentary 4.16) Krishna states that distinguishing between action (**Karma**) and inaction (**Akarma**) is not easy. Even the wise get confused. If one fails to

determine the right action, much effort and expense will lead to zero results or an evil outcome. Knowing the right path will lead to liberation. Here, "Akarma" is often used in the sense of wrong or fruitless action.

As said before, mere theoretical knowledge is not enough. When true knowledge enters a person, they automatically choose the right action over the wrong.

"O you who have believed, if you fear Allah, He will grant you a criterion (to judge between right and wrong) and will remove from you your misdeeds and forgive you. And Allah is the possessor of great bounty." (Al-Quran 8:29)

(Commentary 4.17) To be free from the bondages of the material world, one must act. Therefore, one must understand what proper action is, because even "inaction" or "wrong action" is a form of activity. Two people might do the same work but with different intentions. To understand Karma, Akarma, and Vikarma, one must understand the purpose and intent behind the act.

For example, in the Kurukshetra war, both sides are fighting. To distinguish "Action" from "Inaction" here, one must understand the Niyat (intention).

(Commentary 4.18) Seeing "inaction in action" and "action in inaction"—how is this possible? Let's use the

Kurukshetra war as an example. Everyone is busy working, sweating, and spending resources. But are they doing "proper action"? Many are performing "Akarma" (fruitless/wrong action) even while being intensely active because the ultimate result of their work is spiritually destructive.

The original state of the soul is pure and blissful. But the gunas of material nature have clouded this. Ego and material desire have diverted them from their true purpose. They are fighting for dominance as if they will stay in this world forever, yet they brought nothing into this world at birth.

Among the combatants, one group is performing "Akarma" (wrong action). The other side is forced to act to resist this wrong; from that perspective, their fighting is "Proper Action," even though war itself is not the ultimate "Action" man was sent here for. In the creation of man, the angels expressed fear:

"...Will You place upon it one who causes corruption therein and sheds blood, while we declare Your praise and sanctify You?..." (Al-Quran 2:30)

The intelligent person, even while engaged in physical activity, does not attach their "self" to the work. They remain connected to the Divine (**Yoga-yukta**). In the

context of the war, Krishna's vast army is fighting for the Kauravas, yet Krishna Himself is the charioteer for Arjuna. He takes no side for personal gain. He acts, but has no interest in the result. This is **Vikarma** (or transcendental action)—where one is active, yet remains unaffected as if they have done nothing.

Verse 4.19 One is understood to be in full knowledge whose every endeavor is devoid of desire for sense gratification and the sense of "I-ness." He is said by sages to be a worker whose fruitive reactions are burnt up by the fire of perfect knowledge.

Verse 4.20 Abandoning all attachment to the results of his activities, ever satisfied and independent, he performs no fruitive action, although engaged in all kinds of undertakings.

(Commentary 4.19) Fire turns everything to ashes. Similarly, action is "burnt" by the fire of knowledge. When knowledge is so perfect that it consumes the "fruit" of the action, no reaction (sin or merit) is stored. The action becomes "Vikarma."

This knowledge is the understanding of the self and the Divine—realizing that I did not create myself and I do not own the world. Everything is God's grace. Therefore, the work and its fruits belong to Him.

"Say: 'Indeed, my prayer, my rites of sacrifice, my living and my dying are for Allah, Lord of the worlds.'" (Al-Quran 6:162)

(Commentary 4.20) The desire for results and the claim of ownership are what disturb a person and bind them to the world. Fears of loss and plans for gain keep a person enslaved. One who acts but abandons the desire for the fruit is free and independent. They feel constant inner peace. They realize that they own nothing—not even their own birth or the land they walk on—and thus, while their body is fully engaged in work, they remain a "non-doer," acting only as a witness or observer of the nature working through them.

Verse 4.21 One who is free from all desires, whose mind and intellect are controlled, and who has abandoned all sense of ownership and the propensity for possession—acting only with the body for the sake of basic maintenance—incurs no sin.

Verse 4.22 One who is satisfied with whatever comes of its own accord, who is free from duality and envy, and who remains steady in both success and failure, is never bound by action even though performing it.

(Commentary 4.21) When the mind and intellect are restrained and inner desires are removed, and when one

has abandoned the thought and tendency of dominance and possession, only their physical body performs the action. Their inner self does not indulge in it.

One who performs action yet thinks, "The body is working, I am not," understands the distinction between the body and the soul (the "I"). Such a person does not become the enjoyer of the fruits of action. Action performed after renouncing the sense of "I-ness" (ego) is considered Vikarma. It creates no result—neither good nor bad, profit nor loss, auspicious nor inauspicious. Consequently, by performing such actions, they do not incur sin; that is, they receive no karmic reaction.

If someone acts after renouncing the ego, even if the action turns out to be "wrong" (Akarma) in appearance, they do not suffer the consequences. As simple as this sounds, it is not easy to realize. In essence, the ego cannot be discarded easily. However, when it is successfully renounced, all associated conditions of renunciation are met, and one does not have to be the "enjoyer" of results.

Essentially, action devoid of ego and desire is not done for personal gain. There is no motive for self-interest. Behind it lies a thought for the welfare of all. Such action is no longer "mine"; it turns into action performed for God. In such a mindset, even an apparent "wrong action"

does not become a cause for sin.

(Commentary 4.22) How can someone who has no inner desire for personal gain be bound by the bondage of action? They cannot. Due to knowledge, what happens to such a person is that they remain satisfied with whatever comes naturally. They believe that whatever is to be given, God will give; just as He gave life, arranged a place on earth, and provided light and air without being asked. They think, "Was I even worthy of this much? Did I even have the knowledge of what to ask for?" He has given everything. Even this enlightened intelligence is His gift. One who understands things this way has complete trust in God. The sense of "I-ness" disappears. They are not bound by action because their actions are not for themselves.

One who is beyond dualities—happiness and distress, attraction and aversion—is not affected by anything good or bad. Therefore, no emotion can bind them to the world. Although they are conscious, they remain indifferent or neutral. They are equanimous in success and failure. They do not get overwhelmed with joy, nor do they fall into despair. They know how to remain steady. Such a person of knowledge and mental strength harbors no envy toward anyone because they have no need for these things. They maintain a direct inner connection with

God, the Creator of all states. The three modes of nature cannot disturb or bind them. So, what is the outcome of the actions performed by such people?

Verse 4.23 The work of a person who is unattached, free from the influence of the modes of nature, and situated in spiritual consciousness, and who acts for the sake of sacrifice (Yajna), merges entirely into transcendence.

Verse 4.24 One who is fully absorbed in Brahman (the Divine) consciousness is sure to reach the kingdom of God. Because their aim is Brahman, everything offered by them merges into Brahman.

(Commentary 4.23) Knowledge can burn all actions into ashes. Then, nothing remains of that action. The action dissipates and merges completely. It then takes the form of "actionless action." What does this mean?

All actions produce some result, good or bad. But only actions performed with the right knowledge produce no results. Consequently, such actions result in neither merit (Punya) nor sin (Paap). The action becomes safe. What is that knowledge?

It is spiritual or transcendental knowledge—the knowledge of the Soul and God. When transcendental knowledge is gained, one realizes that God is at the root of everything and attaining Him is the primary goal of life.

Then, one perceives the futility of the material world. As it is said:

"Know that... the life of this world is but a delusion." (Al-Quran 57:20)

"And this worldly life is not but diversion and amusement. And indeed, the home of the Hereafter—that is the [eternal] life, if only they knew." (Al-Quran 29:64)

When deep mysteries are realized, attachment to worldly matters fades. Once attachment is gone, one becomes free from the influence of the gunas. Then man realizes that everything in the world exists because of Him, and all actions are because of Him. No action is then considered "true action" unless it is for Him. No one was sent to this world just to enjoy their senses. Therefore, sacrifice (Yajna) is the only true action for a living being.

What is the action of sacrifice? It is action performed for God, with the mindset of service, to please Him. When the mind is completely absorbed in the thought of God or Allah and acts in that consciousness, it is called Yajna.

What do we mean by "action for God"? It means working for the welfare of life and the world while renouncing selfishness, greed, and the desire for results. In work for God, all self-interest and enjoyment are sacrificed. Thus, Yajna means sacrifice or dedication. Actions meant for

sacrifice are the only proper actions.

Such actions free a person from material bondage. In fact, Yajna is the only true action in the world; everything else is a cause of bondage. This is what is called working "in the way of Allah" (Fi-sabilillah).

The truth is, all core concepts are the same everywhere. Social flaws regarding religion are rooted in human ignorance or the tendency of some people to prevent others from understanding the truth.

The person who acts for the sake of sacrifice finds their actions completely dissolved. That is, it leaves no impact of "good" or "bad" results on the doer. The action turns into Vikarma. All their actions become sacrificial. Thus it is taught:

"Say: 'Indeed, my prayer, my rites of sacrifice, my living and my dying are for Allah, Lord of the worlds.'" (Al-Quran 6:162)

Why are quotes from the Quran used while discussing the Gita? These quotes are highlighted to show that although the presentation varies based on time, place, and circumstance, the core message or concept is universally the same.

Action or sacrifice dedicated to the Supreme Lord is the

work of Yajna. While sustaining life and the world, sacrificial work also helps us survive spiritually. Performing Yajna is thus considered a necessary duty for all. When action is performed in the consciousness of sacrifice, everything becomes Brahman-filled or Allah-filled. Since no "good-bad" result is accumulated, it is said that all actions are entirely dissolved.

(Commentary 4.24) One who is absorbed in Brahman (Divine) thought and acts in that consciousness certainly ascends to the realm of Brahman. This is because all their actions are sacrificial, and their goal is Brahman. Essentially, a person attains whatever goal or expectation they strive for. If God is pleased, He rewards them accordingly. In reality, we see this too—one becomes what they strive for, whether a doctor, an engineer, etc.

One whose work is performed in Brahman consciousness, who sees Brahman in everything, and who can think of nothing else but Brahman, finds their destination to be Brahman. Everything offered by them merges into Brahman.

When fallen into the material world, the pure consciousness of the living being is covered by ignorance due to the influence of the three modes. The more one works in the thought of the Supreme Lord, the more they attain "Brahman-hood." The step beyond humanity is

attaining Brahman-hood.

Brahman is the transcendental environment or nature. The effulgence radiating from God is the "Brahman-jyoti" (Divine Light). Everything in the universe exists within this light. As it is said:

"Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth... Light upon light!" (Al-Quran 24:35)

Acting in Brahman consciousness makes everything "Brahman-filled." All actions in this consciousness are Yajna. However, there are various types of Yajna: Deva-yajna, Brahma-yajna, Brahmacharya-yajna, Grihastha-yajna, Indriya-yajna, Yoga-yajna, Tapah-yajna, Dravya-yajna, and Svadhyaya-yajna. There are specific rules for performing these. The primary objective of all sacrifices is to be free from material bondage and attain the proximity of God. As it is said:

"To Allah is your return..." (Al-Quran 11:4)

In the following verses, Krishna provides examples of certain sacrifices according to the rules:

Verse 4.25 Some yogis perfectly worship the demigods by offering sacrifices to them, and some offer sacrifices in the fire of the Supreme Brahman.

Verse 4.26 Some sacrifice the hearing process and the

senses in the fire of self-control, and others sacrifice the objects of the senses, such as sound, in the fire of the senses.

Verse 4.27 Others, who are interested in achieving self-realization through control of the mind and senses, offer the functions of all the senses, and of the life breath, as oblations into the fire of the controlled mind.

Verse 4.28 Some perform sacrifice by possessions (Dravya-yajna), some by austerities (Tapah-yajna), some by practicing the yoga of eightfold mysticism (Yoga-yajna), and others by studying the Vedas to advance in spiritual knowledge.

Verse 4.29 Still others, who are inclined to the process of breath restraint to remain in trance, practice by offering the movement of the outgoing breath into the incoming, and the incoming breath into the outgoing, and thus at last remain in trance, stopping all breathing. Others, curtailing the eating process, offer the outgoing breath into itself as a sacrifice.

(Commentary 4.25) The individual soul has fallen into the material world in some way. Due to the three modes, its true knowledge is covered, and it is bound to the world. Methods to be free from this bondage are discussed here.

The veil of ignorance must be lifted through God-consciousness. Yajna is that method. Actions done in God-consciousness are sacrifices. Sacrifice is performed in the hope of attaining God. Karma, Jnana, and Bhakti—all paths have one goal: attaining God. When knowledge is directed toward God, it becomes Jnana Yoga.

People perform sacrifices in different ways. This verse mentions Daiva-yajna and Jnana-yajna.

All sacrificial performances are divided into two categories: one performed to fulfill material desires and the other performed in the hope of attaining God.

It was mentioned above that "One who is absorbed in Brahman consciousness will certainly be elevated to the Brahman-loka." But those who cannot reach that level of absorption perform sacrifices by worshipping various demigods. That is, they worship the different powers of God. In this way, they try to infuse power within themselves or cultivate divine wealth and qualities. This is Daiva-yajna. Through this, divine wealth is collected in the heart, all in the hope of reaching God.

Some worship Indra, Chandra, or Varuna out of a desire for material pleasure. These deities oversee powers like fire, air, water, and lightning. God has entrusted them with these responsibilities. Truly, all power belongs to

God or Allah, not to the deities or angels. They operate according to God's command. Those who worship deities through various Vedic sacrifices for material pleasure are "polytheists."

Some, however, perform sacrifice by offering all actions to God. They guide themselves by God's knowledge and power. This is Jnana-yajna. In this sacrifice, demonic qualities are offered as oblations into the fire of Brahman.

(Commentary 4.26) Some sacrifice the senses in the fire of restraint; they withdraw the senses from objects like form, taste, and smell to remain controlled. This is Brahmacharya. Just as fire burns everything, restraint is a kind of fire.

Sound binds the mind to the material world. Therefore, some do not focus on worldly sounds. They do not listen to mundane talk but focus on chanting the glories of the Magnificent or spreading His greatness. They only listen to words related to the Supreme Lord. They thus sacrifice their hearing and other senses in the fire of restraint. As it is said:

"Know that those who are with your Lord glorify Him by night and by day, and they do not tire." (Al-Quran 41:38)

Some sacrifice objects like sound into the fire of the senses. This means the senses receive objects like sound,

but the person remains unattached. This is Indriya-yajna. Renouncing attachment is the oblation. By changing the subject matter, the stimulative power of the objects (form, taste, smell, sound) is "burnt." No bad influence falls on the mind. The seeker is not attracted and does not "consume" the objects.

(Commentary 4.27) Some offer the functions of all senses and the life breath into the yoga-fire of self-control or Samadhi (trance) and remain absorbed in the bliss of the self. This is Atma-samyama-yajna. Focusing the mind on the soul is called the yoga of self-control. This is the most enlightened sacrifice because it is illuminated by self-knowledge.

(Commentary 4.28) Sacrifice can be classified in many ways. Some perform sacrifice through charity (Dravya-yajna), dedicating material possessions. As it is said:

"As for him who gives and fears Allah and believes in the best [reward], We will ease him toward ease." (Al-Quran 92:5-7)

Many perform sacrifice through severe vows, renouncing domestic comforts. Some fast; some go on pilgrimages. These are Tapah-yajna. Others perform sacrifice through Ashtanga or Raja Yoga—these are Yoga-yajna.

Many study Vedic scriptures, specifically the Upanishads, Vedanta-sutras, or Sankhya philosophy. These are called Svadhyaya-yajna. Just as some read the Bible or Muslims read the Quran, the actions are the same. As it is said:

"And recite the Quran with measured recitation. Indeed, We will cast upon you a heavy word." (Al-Quran 73:4-5)

(Commentary 4.29) This verse discusses Pranayama-yajna. The outgoing breath is Prana, and the incoming breath is Apana. The process of controlling these in yoga is called Pranayama. Some chant the name of "Om" with their breath, others may chant "Allah-hu." The rules and concepts are the same.

In the beginning, one practices Pranayama through various Hatha-yoga techniques. By restraining the senses and removing material attachment, one tries to become free from bondage. These are primarily done for spiritual advancement. Shri Krishna says:

Verse 4.30 All these performers who know the meaning of sacrifice become cleansed of material contamination and purified of sin. By tasting the nectar of the remnants of such sacrifices, they advance toward the supreme eternal atmosphere.

Verse 4.31 O best of the Kuru dynasty, without sacrifice, one cannot live happily even on this planet; what then of

the next?

Verse 4.32 All these different types of sacrifice are approved by the Vedas and are born of different types of action. Knowing them as such, you will become liberated.

(Commentary 4.30) Why is sacrifice performed? For spiritual advancement. To attain the blissful Brahman (Divine) environment or nature. This is what it means to find God. However, sin is the obstacle; it is the cause of worldly bondage. Due to sin, one cannot attain the Divine environment, and the mind finds no peace.

Sin and wrongdoing begin with the desire for sense gratification. Because of sin, the soul falls repeatedly into the cycle of birth and death and suffers the consequences. Unless one is freed from sin, one cannot become pure and transparent. Until one is completely pure, the Divine nature cannot be attained. Through sacrifice, those who know the path control their senses and strive to become free from sin. In certain terminologies, this is called attaining Taqwa—meaning a state of complete purity, flawlessness, and holiness.

The "nectar" attained as a result of sacrifice is Knowledge. This knowledge helps one reach the eternal, primeval Parabrahman. When the mind is successfully restrained through sense control, the result of the sacrifice

emerges. The ultimate result of sacrifice for a human is attaining Self-realization and Divine knowledge. Sacrifice creates that nectar called Knowledge. Liberation lies in knowledge. Knowledge helps a person identify their goal with certainty—the nectar that, when tasted, makes a person successful in reaching their destination.

All sacrifices help in freeing one from sin because these activities impact the mind. In this way, the soul evolves. An evolved soul tastes supreme bliss and attains Divine nature even in this life, and reaches the Divine abode at the end of life.

(Commentary 4.31) Sacrifice is renunciation—the sacrifice made by deities and humans for one another. Through this mutual exchange, the world is conducted beautifully and orderly. This is an established law. It ensures the continued prosperity and happiness of all. Therefore, one who does not perform sacrificial work fails to fulfill their own duty or responsibility. They do not contribute to the workings of the world. This itself is a sin. It is everyone's duty to perform sacrifice for the protection of creation. Without fulfilling this responsibility, happiness cannot be found even in this world.

Due to sin, a person devoid of sacrifice may not attain a human body again and may enter lower species. Thus it

is said: if happiness is not possible in a higher realm like the human world, how can it be found in other realms? As it is stated:

"For them is punishment in the life of this world, and the punishment of the Hereafter is more severe." (Al-Quran 13:34)

The Vedas show the path to liberation from the miseries of the material world. The highest stage of a liberated life is attaining the company of God. Some call it "finding Allah." There are ample arrangements for enjoying happiness in various heavenly realms. As it is said:

"And in the heaven is your provision and whatever you are promised." (Al-Quran 51:22)

Supreme happiness is gained by attaining God or Allah. When one acquires the nature or characteristics of God, they have "found" Him. One who cannot achieve this by breaking free from bondage has no true happiness.

(Commentary 4.32) Various types of sacrifices are mentioned in the Vedic scriptures. Based on the differences in human nature, the Vedas prescribe different types of sacrifices. These are arranged so that a person can perform them according to the capacity of their body, mind, and intellect. Consequently, despite the variations, everyone can become free from the bondage

of the material body.

Creation is sustained through action. All actions in the world are "sacrifice" when performed in the thought of God. Therefore, all sacrifices are born of action. Sacrifice is born from some form of physical, vocal, or mental action. Action is the power of Brahman. Hence, sacrifice is performed for the sake of Brahman.

Action is the process by which a sacrifice is properly completed. That is, the action becomes acceptable to God or Allah. Sacrifice is a specific prescribed process to reach the Worshipful One.

When sacrifice is performed correctly, liberation or entry into the Supreme Brahman becomes possible. The body then takes on a Divine form. A person transforms into a "Great Soul" (Mahapurusha). Then, they no longer possess a sense of individuality, independence, or ego. Through such perfected beings, Brahman Himself speaks.

Brahman is flawless and impartial. If the mind becomes flawless and impartial, it should be understood that the mind is situated in Brahman. The world appears to a person exactly as their mind is—contracted or expanded. Through sacrifice, the mind is conquered by controlling the senses. Only then is the goal achievable. Shri Krishna

says:

Verse 4.33 O chastiser of the enemy, the sacrifice performed in knowledge is greater than the mere sacrifice of material possessions. After all, O son of Pratha, all sacrifice of work culminates in transcendental knowledge.

Verse 4.34 Try to learn the truth by approaching a spiritual master. Inquire from him submissively and render service unto him. The self-realized souls can impart knowledge unto you because they have seen the truth.

Verse 4.35 Having obtained real knowledge from a self-realized soul, you will never fall again into such illusion, for by this knowledge you will see that all living beings are but part of the Supreme, or, in other words, that they are Mine.

(Commentary 4.33) Sacrifices vary according to faith and desire. The goal of all sacrifices is to be free from bondage and attain the proximity of God. As it is said:

"To Him belongs whoever is in the heavens and the earth. And those who are near Him are not prevented by arrogance from His worship, nor do they tire. They exalt Him night and day and do not slacken." (Al-Quran 21:19-20)

Sacrifice is action, but it is the action of renunciation. There is no sacrifice without action, and no perfection without sacrifice. However, the ultimate fruit of sacrifice is knowledge. All actions ultimately culminate in knowledge; that is, they produce the fruit of wisdom.

It is said that the greatest sacrifice is the one that results in Self-realization and Divine knowledge. Only by understanding these two truths is liberation possible. When someone performs a sacrifice with the hope of gaining transcendental knowledge, it is of a higher order.

Sacrifice without knowledge is valueless; it is merely a mundane ritual. It does not lead to the Supreme Goal. Material sacrifices might lead to heaven, but without the sacrifice of knowledge (Jnana-yajna), liberation is not attained.

Sacrifice gives rise to equanimity. Desires and the sense of ego disappear. Consequently, the bondage of action is removed; the fruits of action are burnt in the fire of knowledge.

(Commentary 4.34) The path of spiritual realization is not easy. To gain knowledge, one must go to a person who knows and is experienced in these matters. In one sense, the Supreme Lord is the original Teacher (Guru). He surely provided the necessary knowledge at the

beginning of creation, which has continued through disciplic succession. God Himself has directly instructed the path of religion. One is advised to seek shelter in those who carry that knowledge.

It is said: try to learn that knowledge of sacrifice by approaching a self-realized Truth-seer or Guru, serving them, and inquiring with humility. These are behavioral conditions. Unless the Guru's heart is fully satisfied by the disciple's devotion, the deep mysteries of knowledge will not emerge spontaneously or may be hindered. To know, one must earn the Guru's satisfaction through devotion.

(Commentary 4.35) One who can properly realize the Guru's instructions will never again be disillusioned by material desires or ego. They will see that this world is filled with God or Allah. God is One and Complete with everything; everything exists within Him. Apart from God, nothing in the world has a separate existence.

When correct knowledge is gained, one sees the Supreme Soul everywhere. One realizes that all living beings are situated in the same Soul. When the ability to see the expansion of the same Soul in all living beings arises, a person truly becomes unified with the Supreme Soul. Then, all living beings are felt as one's own soul. Such an empathetic person feels the pain of others and rejoices in others' joy because they see no separation.

They see the One in all and all in the One. They see everything as themselves; they gain the knowledge of equality. As it is said:

"O mankind, fear your Lord, who created you from one soul and created from it its mate and dispersed from both of them many men and women." (Al-Quran 4:1)

Supreme knowledge is that which reveals that the Supreme Soul is the only shelter for all beings. Everything is situated in Him, and the one Soul exists within everyone. When a being knows God in this way, their illusion breaks. The sense of "I" disappears. Attachment to worldly matters vanishes.

Verse 4.36 Even if you are considered the most sinful of all sinners, when you are situated in the boat of transcendental knowledge, you will be able to cross over the ocean of miseries.

Verse 4.37 As a blazing fire turns firewood to ashes, O Arjuna, so does the fire of knowledge burn to ashes all reactions to material activities.

Verse 4.38 In this world, there is nothing so sublime and pure as transcendental knowledge. Such knowledge is the mature fruit of all mysticism. And one who has become accomplished in the practice of devotional service enjoys this knowledge within himself in due

course of time.

(Commentary 4.36) True lovers of God do not commit sin. What may appear as sin to ordinary people might seem so only because it is judged by worldly rules. But a devotee sometimes acts above worldly laws.

An act seen as a sin by the naked eye might be for a greater good. For example, one might see someone being killed and perceive it as a sinful act. By worldly laws, it is indeed a sin. But if the person is acting within the framework shown by the Providence, they can cross even that ocean of sin.

Many examples can be given which, in ordinary eyes or worldly laws, would be counted as sin. However, explaining everything is not always appropriate or wise, as it could cause harm to the general public. Exceptions are not meant to be followed by everyone.

It should be noted that even in such cases, certain conditions apply. The intention (Niyat) behind the action must be righteous. There can be no artificial or natural dishonesty in such work. Otherwise, they too would become a sinner. Such work cannot be done out of attachment, greed, or personal convenience.

The same act can be done with a selfish motive or selflessly. The difference lies only in knowledge and

intention. Due to the difference in knowledge and intention, an act becomes a sin. Conversely, through knowledge, one is liberated from sin. Thus it is said: even if you are the most sinful of all sinners, you can cross the ocean of misery with the boat of divine knowledge. Knowledge is extremely important; it can turn sin into merit and merit into sin. As it is stated:

"They found a servant of Ours, whom We had given mercy from Us and whom We had taught from Us a [certain] knowledge. Moses said to him, 'May I follow you on [the condition] that you teach me from what you have been taught of sound judgement?' He said, 'Indeed, with me you will never be able to have patience. And how can you have patience for what you do not encompass in knowledge?' [Moses] said, 'You will find me, if Allah wills, patient, and I will not disobey you in [any] order.' He said, 'Then if you follow me, do not ask me about anything until I make to you a mention of it.' ... So they set out, until when they met a boy, [the man] killed him. [Moses] said, 'Have you killed a pure soul for other than [justice for] a soul? You have certainly done a deplorable thing.' He said, 'Did I not tell you that with me you would never be able to have patience?'" (Al-Quran 18:65-76)

In this way, according to worldly rules, some actions might seem sinful. However, a pure devotee fully

engaged in the service of God might sometimes appear to act against scriptural injunctions. In reality, they are not. Even highly intelligent people cannot always understand the plans and activities of a pure devotee.

There is another kind of sin committed due to ignorance or lack of correct knowledge. But a person who loves God/Khuda takes their stance in the right place the moment they gain knowledge. They too can cross the ocean of sin. Their heart is situated in the right place; a temporary mistake might occur due to lack of knowledge. Knowledge is a very important matter. As it is said:

"And never would your Lord have destroyed the cities unjustly while their people were unaware." (Al-Quran 6:131)

However, merely understanding the above principles is not enough. A person's heart must be righteous from all sides. One must be honest. There should be no malice or hatred. There should be no flaw from any side. Above all, the person or their action must be acceptable to God or Allah. The matter of acceptability to the Supreme Lord might not be entirely understandable through ordinary logic or calculation. Therefore, the burden of all judgment must be left to God or Allah. That is, one must be surrendered to God in all matters. Such an attitude is the

result of knowledge.

In fact, knowledge creates or defines the concept of sin and merit. Knowledge defines these terms. One kind of knowledge might declare someone a sinner and punish them, while another kind of knowledge might rescue the same person from that sin and provide liberation. Knowledge is the cause of sin and merit.

In some societies, hugging girls is a sin. In others, hugging boys is unacceptable. Human society judges good-bad, sin-merit based on how it has been built or what knowledge it holds. Ultimate truth, therefore, lies in the hands of God.

One whose heart is clean and always absorbed in God-consciousness: first, they do not commit sin knowingly. Second, even if they do, they stabilize themselves in the right place at the right time. Third, God knows everyone's heart; if He wishes, He can let anyone pass. He can do everything. His capability cannot be limited. As it is said:

"And to Allah belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth, and Allah is over all things competent." (Al-Quran 3:189)

(Commentary 4.37) Knowledge is compared to fire. Just as fire turns everything to ashes, knowledge can extinguish all actions. One kind of knowledge makes a

person a sinner; another kind of knowledge can extinguish that sin and even turn it into merit. In that sense, knowledge is the driver of man.

Through the ages, many people have been burnt as "sinners" based on certain knowledge. Hundreds of years later, by gaining correct knowledge, people realized the mistakes of their past actions. Knowledge can turn an action into inaction, or inaction into a specific type of action (Vikarma). That is, just as knowledge can determine the good or bad of an action, it can also burn all actions into ashes. Then, no action remains; no result of action is left.

In some societies, women must walk with their faces covered. In others, they walk without covering. Both societies function well in their own ways. No problem occurs. But why does one cover the face and the other not? Because of the difference in knowledge.

Knowledge can turn today's sin into merit and today's merit into sin. It can also burn away all actions—both sin and merit—and their results. Action then becomes Vikarma or actionless. Consequently, action produces no result—neither good nor bad, sin nor merit. Action then ceases to be a cause of bondage. Knowledge can bring about a radical change in everything. Just as knowledge defines sin and merit, with the same power, it can

extinguish the actions performed. It can turn sin to merit, merit to sin, or burn everything to ashes. As it is said:

"Allah will change their evil deeds into good deeds." (Al-Quran 25:70)

(Commentary 4.38) The significance or greatness of knowledge lies in realizing the essence. Without realizing the essence, nothing can be understood correctly. Knowledge provides the correct concept of a subject. Therefore, nothing can be as glorious and pure as knowledge. Thus it is said:

"He gives wisdom to whom He wills, and whoever has been given wisdom has certainly been given much good. And none will remember except those of understanding." (Al-Quran 2:269)

The cause of human bondage is ignorance. The way to attain liberation is knowledge—specifically, spiritual knowledge. A person connected through yoga strives to attain this knowledge. In due course, knowledge illuminates the heart of a person perfected in yoga. The inner self becomes firm and believes in the acquired knowledge. This is self-confidence. The heart of a self-confident person is connected to the Supreme. Self-confidence is the best result arising from knowledge. A person perfected in yoga gains that knowledge within

their own heart in time.

Verse 4.39 A faithful man who is dedicated to transcendental knowledge and who subdues his senses is eligible to achieve such knowledge, and having achieved it he quickly attains the supreme spiritual peace.

Verse 4.40 But ignorant and faithless persons who doubt the revealed scriptures do not attain God consciousness; they fall down. For the doubting soul there is happiness neither in this world nor in the next.

(Commentary 4.39) To gain knowledge on any subject, one must have interest and devotion (Bhakti) toward it. Without interest and devotion, knowledge is not attained. It is impossible to gain knowledge without practice (Sadhana), and practice is not done without interest and devotion. Thus, to gain knowledge, one must have interest, devotion, and must practice.

Knowledge is not attained in a restless mind because, in such a case, knowledge cannot enter properly. Therefore, one must restrain the senses. Yoga is the way to subdue the senses. Hence, the advice to be connected in yoga. By fulfilling all these conditions, one becomes worthy of knowledge.

When a worthy person succeeds in their practice, Self-

realization and transcendental knowledge illuminate the heart. Knowledge helps one understand that all worldly actions born of thoughts and anxieties are unnecessary. It helps one realize the futility of everything in the world. As it is said:

"Know that... the life of this world is but a delusion." (Al-Quran 57:20)

When the knowledge of truth enters the heart and stays firm, moving away from the illusions of worldly falsehood, only then is it possible to renounce attachment and ego. When attachment and ego are removed, one is liberated from worldly bondage. The "pull" of the world's illusion fades. Then it is possible to move about liberated and free. This is true freedom. In a liberated, free life, supreme peace is attained.

(Commentary 4.40) A person without faith or devotion has no interest in gaining knowledge. Without interest, knowledge is not attained. On the other hand, an ignorant person cannot gain knowledge due to their ignorance. Even if a doubting person has knowledge, it is meaningless because they do not believe.

The scriptures explain what the bondage of action is and how to be free from it. Those who have no scriptural knowledge are unaware of these matters. They are also

unaware of the goal and purpose of life. How then will they find liberation?

Why was man created? What is the goal of life? Is it merely to enjoy the senses? Why would the Creator create him for that reason? Those who are ignorant of the answers to these questions consider enjoying this life to be the ultimate goal. They have no connection with any greater goal or purpose. Such people become intensely attached to the senses. A life attached to the senses is a life lived in vain.

Merely because of ignorance, the ignorant suffer the results of ignorance. Gradually, they lead themselves toward destruction. Doubting persons do not believe even if they know the facts. Because they do not believe, they do not follow. Consequently, even if the knowledge of the philosophy is true, they too head toward the same fate because they do not follow the correct path.

One must have faith in an ideal. One must move forward considering it as the truth. Otherwise, life has no goal. Without a goal, one cannot reach a destination. One cannot move forward with doubt. Whatever goal one sets, the ultimate destination is one. Therefore, a goal must be fixed in life.

When the final time arrives, the ignorant, faithless, and

doubting or unbelieving person leaves this world with incompleteness and regret in a goal-less and purposeless life. They find happiness neither in this world nor in the next. They meet destruction and enter lower species. Shri Krishna says:

Verse 4.41 One who acts in devotional service, renouncing the fruits of his actions, and whose doubts have been destroyed by transcendental knowledge, is situated factually in the self. Thus he is not bound by the reactions of work, O conqueror of riches.

Verse 4.42 Therefore, the doubts which have arisen in your heart out of ignorance should be slashed by the weapon of knowledge. Armed with yoga, O Bharata, stand up and fight.

(Commentary 4.41-42) Through yoga, one must become absorbed in trance (Samadhi) and meditate on the Supreme Lord. This meditation illuminates the knowledge of truth. Man learns to understand himself. The knowledge of Self-realization informs man about his true nature. It helps in realizing the true nature of God and one's own relationship with Him. Consequently, knowledge regarding the true goal and purpose of life is attained. Then, the sense of "I" no longer remains within. A realization arises that "everything is because of God." From that realization, all actions are performed only for

God or in the thought of God.

When one is able to perceive the deep mysteries of life and the world, the seeker's heart surrenders itself to the Supreme Soul. The individual soul merges and becomes one with the Supreme Soul. In fact, knowledge strengthens the heart. Man becomes self-confident. Self-confidence removes all doubts. No action in the world can bind such a self-realized person anymore.

The bondage of the material world, the false illusion of a temporary life, and the various doubts in the heart are primarily caused by ignorance or the limitation of transcendental knowledge. This limitation has made Arjuna lifeless. The failure to perceive the true truth is the cause of his listlessness. In this state, he cannot understand what should be done.

The way to overcome this state is to gain the knowledge of truth. Shri Krishna has informed Arjuna of all aspects of knowledge. However, perceiving and realizing the truth of the matter for oneself is important. For that, one must be situated in yoga. By being situated in yoga and meditating with a concentrated mind, all knowledge regarding life and the world will be revealed. All doubts will be removed, and a firm belief in one's own knowledge will be created. This is self-confidence. Self-confidence helps a person to stand up.

The actions of a believer or devotee are not truly their own. All their actions are sacrificial actions (Yajna). Sacrificial actions are performed as duties for worldly welfare. Sin does not touch such actions. Therefore, by gaining proper knowledge and removing all doubts of the mind—starting from the sense of sin—Shri Krishna tells Arjuna with firmness to stand up. He tells him to act selflessly without considering good-bad, happiness-distress, gain-loss, or victory-defeat. He tells him to fight.

To seek the shelter of knowledge with the desire to know the ultimate goal and to try to know God is Jnana Yoga. When one comes to know about God and realizes the relationship between the soul and Him, the true goal of life can be understood. Knowledge then reaches perfection. All mysteries of life and the world are revealed. When the mystery of creation is realized, man becomes self-confident.

Self-confidence is the most valuable fruit obtained from transcendental knowledge. Self-confidence helps a person to move with firmness. It helps one to stand up from a lifeless state. Yoga creates that mental state. Shri Krishna, therefore, tells Arjuna to be situated in yoga. He says:

"O Bharata! Slash the doubt in your heart born of ignorance with the sword of knowledge! Be situated in

yoga! Stand up!"

Marvelous Gita by A Z M Alamgir

Chapter 5: Sannyasa-Yoga

(Yoga of Renunciation)

(Total Verses: 29)

Summary: In the pursuit of liberation (Moksha), two distinct paths emerge among those seeking the Absolute (Brahman). One is **Yoga-marga** (the path of action in devotion) and the other is **Sannyasa-marga** (the path of renunciation). The path of renunciation posits that action is the cause of bondage; therefore, action must be abandoned. Renunciants (Sannyasis) give up work, believing liberation is impossible without such abandonment.

The true goal of human life is to gain freedom from the shackles of material nature. This can be achieved either

by renouncing action or by performing action correctly. If everyone in the world chose the path of Sannyasa and abandoned work, how would creation survive? Therefore, attaining the goal through action is superior. Through right action, one achieves liberation while simultaneously ensuring the maintenance of the world and universal welfare (Loka-sangraha). Both life and the world are benefited.

Shri Krishna, therefore, advises Arjuna not to abandon action but to perform it with **Yogic consciousness**. One must attain Brahman through that very path. Realizing Brahman is true liberation from bondage; it marks the end of all suffering and the attainment of supreme peace.

Verses and Commentary

Verse 5.1 Arjuna said: O Krishna! First, you asked me to renounce action (Sannyasa), and then you praised the performance of action (Yoga). Please tell me decisively which of these two is superior.

(Commentary 5.1) While speaking of Karma-yoga, Shri Krishna also praised the path of knowledge (Jnana-marga). He stated that the sacrifice of knowledge is superior, nothing is as pure as knowledge, and all actions culminate in knowledge. He said liberation lies in

knowledge. Conversely, in Karma-yoga, he states liberation is found in selfless action. Arjuna is confused by these seemingly dualistic statements. He wants to know for certain: for spiritual practice, is it better to choose Sannyasa by abandoning work through the path of Sankhya (knowledge), or is it better to work while situated in Yoga? Which is better? Shri Krishna says:

Verse 5.2 Both the renunciation of action and the yoga of action lead to liberation; but of the two, the yoga of action (Karma-yoga) is superior to the renunciation of action.

Verse 5.3 Know him to be a perpetual renunciant who neither craves nor hates anything. O mighty-armed! Being free from all dualities, he is easily liberated from bondage and attains happiness.

(Commentary 5.2) Shri Krishna explains that adopting Sannyasa by renouncing action in the path of knowledge, and performing Karma-yoga or selfless action in the path of Yoga, both grant liberation. Both free one from material bondage and suffering. However, performing work in the thought of the Supreme Lord with faith and devotion is better than abandoning it. In that case, work brings welfare to life, the world, and society. This type of work is known as "Service to God." Some call it "performing duties toward Allah" or "working in His path."

In selfless Karma-yoga, there is no desire to enjoy the fruits of one's labor. Consequently, while public welfare is achieved through the work, the worker remains free from the bondage of action. Therefore, working while situated in Yoga is superior to total abandonment of work (Karma-vairagya).

(Commentary 5.3) Shri Krishna states that one who does not crave anything and feels no hatred or regret for not receiving something is a constant Sannyasi. Worldly dualities like happiness and distress do not disturb them. They have no attachment or bondage regarding gaining or losing worldly things. Because of this freedom from bondage and suffering, they attain happiness.

There is a common misconception about Sannyasa among the general public; many believe it means giving up all work. But Shri Krishna says that one who lives in the world, abandons attachment and hatred, and works selflessly is the true Sannyasi. As it is said:

"Monasticism (Sannyasa)... they invented it only seeking the pleasure of Allah; but they did not observe it with right observance." (Al-Quran 57:27)

Verse 5.4 Only the ignorant speak of the path of knowledge (Sankhya) and the path of action (Yoga) as different; the wise do not say so. They say that by being

firmly established in either, one gains the fruits of both.

Verse 5.5 The state reached by the followers of Sankhya (renunciants) is also reached by the followers of Yoga. He who sees that Sankhya-yoga and Karma-yoga are one, truly sees things as they are.

(Commentary 5.4-5) Some believe Sannyasa (Sankhya) and Karma-yoga are distinct. However, those who truly understand do not say so because even though the methods differ, the goal of both philosophies is the same: to attain Moksha or freedom from bondage. Or, it can be said, to find God/Allah. Consequently, by being situated in either, one receives the benefits of both.

In Jnana-yoga, one works by understanding their own capacity. In Karma-yoga, one works by depending on God. In Sannyasa, it is thought that action is the cause of bondage; thus, liberation is impossible without renouncing action. Therefore, action is abandoned in Sannyasa. In Yoga, it is thought that not action itself, but the desire for the fruits of action is the cause of bondage. Thus, liberation is attained by renouncing the fruits. There is no need to abandon the action itself. In Yoga, the maintenance of the world and universal welfare are also achieved.

The purpose of philosophical research is to become

aware of the ultimate goal of life. All philosophies search for the Supreme Lord, God, or Allah, and attempt to establish a relationship with Him. As a result, the state attained through Sankhya is the same state reached through Yoga; only the paths differ.

In Sannyasa, one must become detached from worldly matters. Conversely, in Yoga, one must become attached to God. Now, one cannot become attached to God without being detached from worldly matters. Thus, both are necessary for each other. Truth-seers, therefore, see that Sankhya-yoga and Karma-yoga are identical.

If Sannyasa and Yoga lead to the same destination, what is the specialty of Karma-yoga? Shri Krishna says:

Verse 5.6 O mighty-armed! Without Yoga, mere renunciation (Sannyasa) brings distress. But a sage equipped with Yoga attains Brahman without delay.

Verse 5.7 One who is equipped with Yoga, is pure in heart, has controlled the self and conquered the senses, and is kind to all living beings, is never entangled even though always engaged in work.

Verse 5.8-9 A person in the divine consciousness, although engaged in seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, eating, moving about, sleeping, breathing, speaking,

giving and receiving, and opening or closing the eyes, always knows within himself that he actually does nothing at all. He knows that it is only the senses occupied with their objects.

(Commentary 5.6) Yoga or Karma-yoga means working without attachment to results. This is a method of establishing a connection with the Supreme. In this path, one attempts to restrain or subdue the senses. If the senses are not subdued, they gravitate toward their objects. When they engage with objects, a desire to possess them arises, leading to worldly bondage—which acts as an obstacle to attaining God's proximity. Thus, subduing the senses is the primary task. If this is achieved, attaining Brahman becomes easy.

On the other hand, Sannyasis follow the Sankhya philosophy. According to this view, man is not the material body; his true nature is the Soul. Without performing the eternal duty of the Soul, there is no liberation. They strive to achieve this, but sense control is not explicitly attempted there. Consequently, even if work is renounced in Sannyasa without the desire for results, the disturbance caused by the senses remains.

Thus, it is said that without Yoga, mere Sannyasa is distressing. Due to the disturbance of the senses, it becomes difficult for them to attain Brahman. But a sage

equipped with Yoga attains Brahman quickly because he can remain free from the disturbance of the senses. Yoga is the way to subdue the senses. When the senses are subdued, it is possible to focus properly on the Supreme. What are the symptoms of such a person?

(Commentary 5.7-9) When one is successfully linked in Yoga, the senses are brought under control. Such a person is self-controlled; he can regulate himself. Due to this power of self-regulation, his heart becomes pure and transparent. Out of self-realization, he becomes kind to all living beings and sees God everywhere.

Even though such a person is engaged in all activities, because he is situated in Yogic consciousness, he does not become entangled with the objects of the senses. He believes that the senses and their objects are merely interacting with each other, and he himself is doing nothing. In all actions, he remains indifferent, neutral, or a "non-doer."

The opening and closing of eyes means the senses are reacting to their objects. Similarly, in seeing, hearing, touching, and smelling, he thinks the senses are merely acting upon their objects. That is, the body is acting. But the Soul, which is distinct from the body, is not entangled in anything. He does not associate himself with these tasks. In this consciousness, a Yogi remains free from

worldly bondage. It is further said:

Verse 5.10 One who performs his duty without attachment, surrendering the results unto the Supreme Lord, is unaffected by sin, just as the lotus leaf is untouched by water.

Verse 5.11 The Yogis, abandoning attachment, act with body, mind, intelligence and even with purified senses, only for the purpose of purification of the soul.

Verse 5.12 A steady devotee attains unadulterated peace because he offers the result of all activities to Me; whereas a person who is not in divine union, who is greedy for the fruits of his labor, becomes entangled.

(Commentary 5.10) The deluded being thinks, "I am performing the work." This is his ego or sense of "I-ness," and for that reason, he wants to enjoy the fruits of his actions. Because of this ego, he entangles himself deeply with the action and its results. Consequently, he becomes bound by action and must suffer its good or bad consequences. Ego is one of the primary causes of bondage.

Conversely, one who knows the difference between the body and the soul understands that work is performed by the body according to its nature. Nature (Prakriti) impels it, and Providence plays a hand. But the being situated in

the material body—the true self—does nothing. He is a non-doer. That is, he abandons the ego. Work performed without ego is surrendered to Brahman.

In this way, by abandoning ego and attachment to results, one who performs all work in the thought of Brahman cannot be touched by sin, just as a lotus leaf is not touched by water. He abandons the mentality of taking credit for the work and surrenders all credit to God. In work done for God's sake, there is no liability for the doer.

Work done in the thought of God is generally free from the desire for self-interest or personal enjoyment. Such work is considered for the welfare of the greater population. No sin touches work done for welfare. Therefore, work must be done by surrendering it to God or Brahman. This is how a Yogi works. He works without attachment, without craving for personal enjoyment, and by abandoning the ego. It is said:

"Whoever submits his face (himself) to Allah while being a doer of good will have his reward with his Lord." (Al-Quran 2:112)

(Commentary 5.11) There is a difference between the work of an ordinary person and that of a Yogi, even if they both perform the same task. The difference lies in their

heart, mind, thought, intention, and knowledge.

Commonly, everyone works to enjoy the fruits born of the work, being attached to the objects. A Yogi also performs the same work using his body, mind, and senses. It might seem like both are doing the same thing. But their intention and knowledge differ.

A Yogi does not work out of attachment to objects. He works by surrendering to God. He works by abandoning the ego. Working this way purifies the inner self. A Yogi can do this, but not everyone can. This is the difference between a Yogi or a spiritually-minded person and an ordinary one. They work for the welfare of society and humanity to show the path to all.

(Commentary 5.12) A Yogi renounces the fruits of his labor. He works without attachment. Consequently, he has no worldly pull. He has no regret regarding gaining or not gaining results. No fear of losing anything disturbs his heart. By surrendering everything to God and renouncing the results, he attains unalloyed peace. But those who do not work in such consciousness become deeply entangled in worldly bondage while trying to calculate profit and loss. Worldly suffering chases them, and they never find peace.

Verse 5.13 When the embodied being mentally

renounces all activities, he resides happily in the city of nine gates (the body), neither working nor causing work to be done.

Verse 5.14 The embodied soul, the master of the city of his body, does not create activities, nor does he induce people to act, nor does he create the fruits of action. All this is enacted by the modes of material nature.

(Commentary 5.13) Here, the being is called an "embodied being." That is, the body is not the being. The true being—the life or consciousness—holds or takes shelter in the body. The body is merely a machine-like outer covering. The true soul resides safely and in supreme happiness inside the "fortress" of the body. However, not everyone stays happy; one must know how to take that happiness. For that, knowledge must be acquired or must manifest in the brain.

Only he is happy who, despite performing all work with the body, keeps himself restrained and mentally renounces the results. Consequently, he does not associate himself with the action. He does not cause anything to be done by anyone else. The body performs work according to its own nature.

A person with such knowledge and realization does not have to suffer the worldly agony that results from selfish

work. Free and independent from all pulls, he lives in supreme happiness in the "city of nine gates." The nine gates of the body are: eyes (2), ears (2), nostrils (2), mouth (1), genitals (1), and anus (1).

(Commentary 5.14) The body is composed of material nature; it is a covering or fortress. The master or owner of the body is the Soul. The Soul is inactive, immutable, indifferent, and neutral. He does not impose any authority on anything, nor does he create any work. No connection to the fruits of action is created by him. He is neither the body nor a part of it. He is not material; he is living. He exists within the body as a non-doer. Then how are all these actions being performed?

The body is like a machine. The senses, which are parts of the body, come into contact with the external world and send information back regarding objects. The body or machine is automatically activated and reacts according to its nature or disposition. This is how a being's actions are created. Every body is compelled to work according to its own nature.

This can be understood by thinking of a modern driverless car. The car or machine moves forward on the road automatically, overcoming all obstacles. The passenger sits inside traveling in supreme happiness. Despite this, there is an unseen controller of the vehicle.

Shri Krishna says:

Verse 5.15 The Supreme Lord is all-pervading; He accepts neither anyone's sin nor anyone's merit. Since knowledge is enveloped by ignorance, living beings are bewildered.

Verse 5.16 When, however, one is enlightened with the knowledge by which ignorance is destroyed, then his knowledge reveals everything, as the sun lights up everything in the daytime.

(Commentary 5.15) The Lord is Vibhu—all-pervading, full of opulence and majesty. He is the universal soul. He is indifferent or immutable regarding the sins or merits committed by anyone. He neither accepts anyone's sin nor anyone's merit. He has no need to think about such things. Due to ignorance, the living being himself desires and creates various situations. Consequently, his own actions create a flow of results that forces him to experience good or bad consequences.

If a human lived alone in nature, no sin or merit would arise from his actions. In that case, who would judge sin or merit? In reality, social humans themselves raise questions of good and bad regarding a matter. That is when these concepts are born. If humans did not disturb one another or remained indifferent to each other's

affairs, sin or merit would not be considered. But the being thinks, "I have done this good deed," or "He has done that bad deed." That is, a sense of "I-ness" works within everyone. Because of this ego, one imposes guilt or virtue on another. That is where the question of sin, merit, and their consequences arises. In essence, humans themselves elevate or degrade one another. God is indifferent or neutral in these matters; He has no need to think about them.

Due to ignorance regarding the difference between the body and the soul, living beings are bewildered. They cannot imagine that the same Supreme Soul exists everywhere. One tries to prove a specific physical form is superior or wants to belittle another form. That is, one wants to prove themselves virtuous and others sinful. Such thoughts arise because of the ego. If one abandons the ego, considers themselves a non-doer, and works by surrendering to God, the sense of sin and merit is no longer needed. Then everything is felt as God-pervaded.

God directs life and the world. He leads the being toward the good path, and also toward the bad path. Thus, one goes to heaven or to hell. However, which path God will lead the being on depends on the being's own desire. That is, the individual soul has the independence to desire freely. But it does not have its own power to move. God

is the granter of the being's desire.

The being's desire is fulfilled by the approval of the Almighty. Just as the wind moves the clouds, God's power leads the being toward heaven or hell according to the being's desire. We see the being moving; we do not see God. Just as we see the cloud moving but do not see the wind. Similarly, the power of movement inside the being comes from God through various processes. He is the one who drives. The being only expresses the desire.

It is noteworthy that even one destined for hell does not want to go to hell. Then why would God lead them toward the path of hell? Because they performed actions suited for hell out of ignorance, God leads them on that path according to their actions. Then, the action itself becomes the proof of their desire. As it is said:

"That is for what your hands have put forth and because Allah is not ever unjust to [His] servants." (Al-Quran 22:10)

God does not love anyone excessively, nor does He hate anyone—though it sometimes appears so to humans because they cannot understand all His strategies. He is neutral. He is still, silent, immutable, and indifferent. He is the symbol of justice, balanced, a witness. He does not interfere in anyone's affairs. However, just as a person falls into a ditch with their car by choosing the wrong

path, the matter of suffering bad consequences is the same.

The embodied being becomes bewildered in this matter because they forget God or Allah. God has shown man the correct path. But by forgetting God and neglecting His directions, the being puts itself in danger. As it is said:

"And have shown him the two ways (good and evil)? But he has not broken through the difficult pass." (Al-Quran 90:10-11)

Living beings are bewildered due to ignorance and lack of faith regarding scriptural knowledge. The cause of bewilderment is forgetting God, Lord, or Allah, and thus neglecting His instructions. How can this ignorance be removed?

(Commentary 5.16) It is said that the knowledge of the Soul (Atma-tattva) or self-knowledge can remove this ignorance. This knowledge teaches one to know and understand themselves. Knowledge of the difference between body and soul, the source of existence, and the relationship between the individual soul and the Supreme reveals everything about the Absolute Truth like the light of day. Then, ignorance is dispelled. What is the nature of that knowledge?

Verse 5.17 Those whose intellect is set on the Soul,

whose mind is established in the Soul, who are dedicated to the Soul, and whose devotion is focused on the Soul—having their sins cleansed by knowledge, they reach the state from which there is no return (liberation from rebirth).

Verse 5.18 The humble sages, by virtue of true knowledge, see with equal vision a learned and gentle Brahmin, a cow, an elephant, a dog, and an outcaste.

Verse 5.19 Those whose minds are established in such equality have already conquered the world of birth and death in this very life. Since Brahman is flawless and impartial, they are situated in Brahman.

(Commentary 5.17) It is said that individuals with such knowledge and refined intellect become absorbed in the Soul. Their steadfastness and diligence lie in this absorption. By gaining knowledge of their true nature and keeping themselves detached from action, they remain free from impurity. In other words, while the body performs actions according to its nature, the wise person, through knowledge-based conduct, keeps himself detached from those actions. However, this must come from within through proper understanding.

By being free from worldly attractions or attachments, he gains liberation from the cycle of repeated birth and

death. Knowledge dispels the ignorance that causes worldly bondage. Therefore, they do not have to assume a physical body again. This is a vital concept in this philosophy, closely related to faith.

(Commentary 5.18) Such seers of the Truth see the same Supreme Soul everywhere. Consequently, they do not view anything as big or small, high or low. They look upon a Brahmin, a cow, an elephant, a dog, and an outcaste with equal vision. In a social context, a Brahmin and an outcaste may belong to different castes or lineages. But the seer perceives that only the external physical coverings or the instruments of action are different. Inside, the same One or the same Supreme Soul exists within everyone. He beholds the same Brahman everywhere. Thus, distinctions born of the body seem meaningless to him, leading to an equal vision toward all.

A knower of Divine Truth believes that God observes human behavior in this way. Despite God being the Supreme Great, He observes how a human expects treatment from God versus how that human views and treats others based on their status. Life, therefore, is the name of a test. This is the true greatness of Absolute or Spiritual knowledge. As it is said:

"He frowned and turned away because the blind man

came to him... But as for him who thinks himself self-sufficient, to him you attend. And from him who has fear of Allah in his heart, you are distracted. No! Indeed, these verses are a reminder." (Al-Quran 80:1-11)

"He might test you as to which of you is best in deed and behavior." (Al-Quran 11:7)

(Commentary 5.19) Equanimity cannot be achieved without self-knowledge or self-realization. Through this knowledge, the Supreme Soul is seen in everyone and everywhere. As long as a being considers the physical body to be its true identity, it remains bound by matter. It identifies with the material body and considers itself separate from other bodies. But when one understands their true nature—that the body and soul are distinct and the individual soul is connected to the Supreme Soul—then they see the Supreme Soul everywhere. Everyone then appears to belong to the same category. At that point, the sense of equality arises. Seeing Brahman everywhere, they become situated in the state of Brahman.

Brahman is impartial and flawless. Since Brahman is equal and faultless, those with equal vision are situated in Brahman. God is faultless because He is free from attraction and aversion (Raga-Dvesha). Similarly, when a being becomes free from attraction and aversion, they

too become faultless. They conquer the world while still alive. Knowledge removes the ignorance that causes worldly bondage. If the cause of the world is conquered, they no longer need to take birth. This is the Supreme Goal. This matter is related to faith. What are the signs of those situated in Brahman?

Verse 5.20 One who does not rejoice upon receiving something pleasant nor grieves upon receiving something unpleasant, who is unbewildered, steady in intellect, and a knower of Brahman—is situated in Brahman.

Verse 5.21 A person whose heart is unattached to external sensory pleasures and finds happiness in the Soul, becomes linked with Brahman through Yoga and attains eternal happiness.

Verse 5.22 O son of Kunti! Pleasures born of contact with material senses have a beginning and an end, and are the causes of misery. A wise person does not rejoice in them.

(Commentary 5.20) One who is not elated by obtaining something pleasant, nor distressed, frustrated, or agitated by obtaining something unpleasant, is beyond the three modes of nature. Such a person is free from delusion. This steady state of mind is called "fixed intellect" (Sthira-buddhi). These are the attributes of

Brahman. As it is said:

"In order that you not despair over what has eluded you and not exult [in pride] over what He has given you." (Al-Quran 57:23)

The mentioned thoughts or qualities are signs of being situated in Brahman. One who attains the nature or qualities of Brahman is situated in Brahman. He possesses knowledge regarding the nature, disposition, and attributes of Brahman.

(Commentary 5.21) A person unattached to worldly matters feels happiness within the Soul. In this world, nothing belongs to the self, nor is anything permanent. Here, any claim of ownership or authority is futile. With such knowledge, one renounces all worldly attachments born of sensory pleasures. No regret disturbs their heart. Such a person experiences supreme happiness within themselves or within the Soul. He is truly happy.

In essence, happiness itself is the core. Those who chase after objects are also chasing this happiness, but being devoid of knowledge, they sacrifice true happiness. He who is satisfied within his own Soul or within himself is truly happy.

Great pain is endured to acquire material objects. In the process of struggling, happiness is sacrificed. Due to

preoccupation, the apparent happiness gained cannot even be enjoyed with satisfaction. Various worries chase the individual. In the race for happiness, they become so entangled in worldly bondage that they can neither let go nor hold on. Happiness is ultimately sacrificed.

(Commentary 5.22) The sensation of pleasure arises from the contact between the senses and their objects. The living being chases after this. But this body is temporary. The senses are temporary. The sensation of pleasure is also temporary. It has a beginning and an end. The wise are not captivated or attracted by anything transient.

Lust, anger, attraction, and aversion are associated with the senses. Although momentary pleasure is experienced, the results of these eventually become the cause of sorrow. A person endowed with knowledge does not rejoice in them. Shri Krishna says:

Verse 5.23 Before giving up the body, one who is able to withstand the urges born of lust and anger in this world—he is a Yogi, he is a happy man.

Verse 5.24 One who finds happiness within, who is active and rejoices within, and whose light is within—he is surely a Yogi. He is situated in Brahman and eventually attains the nirvana of Brahman.

(Commentary 5.23) Lust and anger pull with great force. They bind one to worldly shackles and compel humans to engage in evil deeds. But he who can withstand the force of lust and anger until death is a Yogi—he is truly happy.

It is difficult to restrain the force of lust and anger while living in the world and among sensory objects. Monasticism (Sannyasa) claims that liberation in this life while staying in the world is impossible; hence they renounce the world.

But will a person subdue these tendencies after death? The Gita says these must be subdued while still living in the world, so that the benefits are reaped both in this life and the hereafter. If the benefits cannot be gained while alive, where is the true happiness? Therefore, the habit of subduing these must be developed before leaving the body, and the taste of freedom from bondage and agony must be experienced in this very life.

Yoga is the method to subdue the senses, from which lust and anger originate. He who has conquered the senses is able to withstand the urges of lust and anger—he is a Yogi.

Lust and anger cause disturbance. If they can be subdued, one is saved from that disturbance. Such a person attains true, undisturbed happiness. That is why it

is said that the Yogi is truly happy.

(Commentary 5.24) One who feels happiness within the Soul, who is awakened or exultant from within, is a true Yogi. This is because experiencing happiness and attaining the awakened Soul are the results of Yogic practice. For such a person, all types of sorrow cease. Such a person does not need external objects to feel happiness or to awaken the Soul. His own Soul is illuminated by the light of knowledge. He is inspired from within. He is situated in Brahman. He attains Brahman-Nirvana, which means the dissolution of the "I-ness" or ego of the deluded being bound by Maya and surrendering to the Higher Soul. Who attains Nirvana? It is said:

Verse 5.25 Those whose minds are self-controlled, who are beyond all doubts and dualities, and who are engaged in the welfare of all beings—such sinless sages attain the nirvana of Brahman.

Verse 5.26 For those who are free from lust and anger, who have controlled their minds and have realized the Soul, the nirvana of Brahman is near at hand.

(Commentary 5.25) Certain phrases are very common, such as "serving God" or "performing duties toward Allah." What is the true meaning of these words? Where

shall we find God or Allah?

He resides in the hearts of all living beings. That is why it is said: those sinless sages who are engaged in the welfare of all beings attain Brahman-Nirvana. It is possible to find God through the welfare of living beings.

To find God or Allah, to serve Him, or to perform one's duty toward Him, one must work for the welfare of living beings. Participating in worldly and universal welfare, taking part in the preservation and protection of nature and the environment, and working to maintain order in society—all these are considered work done for God; in turn, the human himself is the beneficiary.

The mentioned actions are also related to the survival of all living beings. That is why it is said that the all-pervading Brahman is always established in sacrifice (Yajna). These represent work done for God or Allah. These are the acts of sacrifice. In such work, there is no personal transaction of "give and take." There is no bondage or attachment. One can remain free even while working. Therefore, it is said that people with self-controlled minds, who are above dualities and engaged in the welfare of all beings—such pure, knowledgeable people attain Brahman-Nirvana. Nirvana is liberation.

(Commentary 5.26) Renunciants who are free from lust

and anger, self-controlled, and self-realized quickly attain Brahman-Nirvana. To control lust, anger, and the mind, the senses must be subdued. For this, one must be linked in Yoga. How should one practice Yoga? It is said:

Verse 5.27-28 Closing the doors to all external sense objects; fixing the gaze between the two eyebrows; suspending the inward and outward breaths within the nostrils; controlling the senses, mind, and intellect; becoming free from desire, fear, and anger—the spiritual person who is always thus situated is certainly liberated.

Verse 5.29 Knowing Me as the enjoyer of all sacrifices and austerities, the Supreme Lord of all worlds, and the friend of all living beings—the Yogis attain peace.

(Commentary 5.27-28) Here, the method of entering Samadhi (meditative absorption) while linked in Yoga is described. This is known by various names such as Raja-yoga, Samadhi-yoga, or Chitta-nirodha-yoga. It has eight limbs, so it is also called Ashtanga-yoga.

How one can be elevated to the level of Brahman-Nirvana by entering Samadhi through Ashtanga-yoga is explained here. This is a specific method or means to withdraw the restless, outward-looking mind and make it self-contained. Through this, the mind is withdrawn from external objects. No opportunity is given for the mind to

focus elsewhere. Thus, the outward mind is restrained and absorbed in the Soul.

This Yoga helps one become free from internal desires, fear, anger, etc. In this way, in a pure, sacred, and transcendental state of being, the presence of the Supreme Soul is felt. Only a person successful in Yoga can realize that. One who can exist in this way is liberated. But what happens after attaining liberation?

(Commentary 5.29) Liberation is freedom from bondage. What bondage? The bondage of material nature; the bondage of action (Karma); the bondage of the world's illusion (Maya) or attraction. The transient pleasure obtained through bondage is an even greater cause of further bondage. All agony originates from and is felt through bondage. Therefore, liberation from bondage is the end of agony. Only upon the end of agony are true happiness and peace attained. This happiness and peace are higher than sensory enjoyment. But attaining it is not very easy.

Man is so entangled in bondage that he will not want to acquire the knowledge and perform the actions necessary for liberation, leaving the pull of Maya. That is why it is called bondage. This is a difficult shackle. Through this, the living being is held tightly within material nature.

To be free from bondage, the knowledge of Truth is required. One must know oneself. One must realize their true nature: Who am I? Where did I come from? Who sent me? Why was I sent? What is my relationship with Him? How is this relationship to be maintained? What is the goal and purpose of life? Self-knowledge (Atma-tattva) and transcendental knowledge must be acquired.

One must understand the transience of life and the world. Here, chasing after things for one's own sake is a futile pursuit. Everything is temporary. As it is said:

"Every soul will taste death... and the enjoyment of worldly life is nothing but the delusion of items." (Al-Quran 3:185)

God is the Supreme Lord of all worlds. He is the sole target of all actions and sacrifices. These matters must be realized. As it is said:

"And that to your Lord is the final goal." (Al-Quran 53:42)

God has granted life. He is supplying everything for survival. He is the only friend of all living beings. This must be believed with heart and soul. As it is said:

"And you have not besides Allah any protector or any helper." (Al-Quran 29:22)

Those who have learned to understand these matters

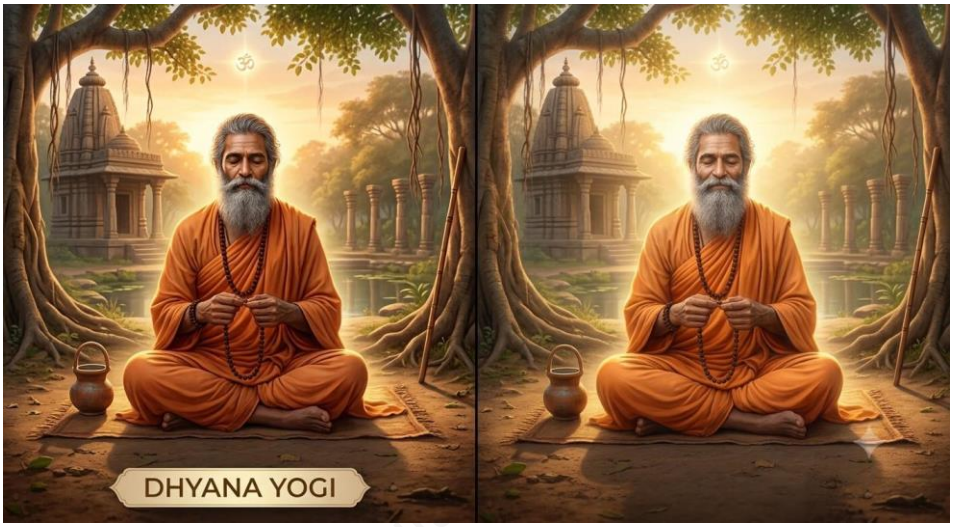
through Samadhi or deep meditation are no longer pulled by worldly objects due to proper knowledge. Mentally severing all worldly ties, they remain absorbed in the thought of God. They always remain in the proximity of God. Because they are in the company of the Sovereign of the universe, they do not focus on petty matters. They have no worldly wants or gains. They have no fear of losing anything. This brings an end to all their suffering. In this way, the Yogi attains unalloyed peace. The goal of Ashtanga-yoga is also to reach this state.

Marvelous Gita by A Z M Alamgir

Chapter 6: Dhyana-Yoga

(The Yoga of Meditation)

(Total Verses: 47)



Summary: Arjuna wished to renounce action to escape grief and the miseries of the world. However, the Yoga of Action (Karma-yoga) is superior to the renunciation of action for attaining liberation. Both are paths to freedom. But if everyone renounced action, how would the world function? It is said that the all-pervading Brahman is established upon sacrifice (Yajna). Sacrifice is action. By performing the actions of sacrifice through Karma-yoga and reaching God, one attains liberation.

God cannot be found with a restless heart. Outward-looking thoughts make the heart restless. Therefore, the

heart must be calmed by focusing on God. This chapter explains how to find God by becoming absorbed in Dhyana-yoga (the Yoga of Meditation). Hence, there is no need to renounce action. There is a way to attain salvation even while performing actions. That is the beneficial path.

Verses and Commentary

Verse 6.1 Lord Krishna said: One who performs his duty without desiring the fruits of action is a true Sannyasi (renunciant) and a true Yogi. But one who merely abandons the sacrificial fire and remains completely inactive is not.

Verse 6.2 O Pandava! Know that what is called Sannyasa (renunciation) is the same as Yoga. For no one can become a Yogi without renouncing worldly motives (Sankalpa).

(Commentary 6.1) By Sannyasi, we generally understand someone who has abandoned all activities of life and the world. However, that misconception is corrected here. It is stated that one who is completely inactive by abandoning sacrifices or all work is not a true Sannyasi. One who performs his duties properly, yet harbors no desire within to enjoy the fruits derived from that work, is

truly a Sannyasi and a Yogi.

(Commentary 6.2) Yoga is a specific method of establishing a relationship with God. When this relationship is established, it becomes possible to renounce the desire for the fruits of action. But this relationship cannot be formed with a restless heart without restraining the mind and senses. Therefore, Yoga is also the method of restraining the mind and senses. In other words, a Yogi must renounce all desires for sense gratification. This is the renunciation of Sankalpa (will/motive).

Sannyasa means renunciation—the abandonment of all actions. In reality, abandoning all physical actions is not Sannyasa. That is why it is said that one who is completely inactive is not a Sannyasi. Sannyasa is the renunciation of "fruitive action" (Sakama-karma). Fruitive action is work done with an internal desire to enjoy the results.

True Sannyasa is the renunciation of fruitive results. That is, a Sannyasi works, but he performs "selfless action" (Nishkama-karma). Nishkama-karma is action where the desire for the fruits has been renounced from within.

A Sannyasi renounces the desire for the fruits of action, meaning he renounces the desire for sense gratification. A Yogi must also renounce all desires for sense

gratification. Both the Yogi and the Sannyasi must be practitioners of renunciation. Therefore, what is Sannyasa is also Yoga. That is why it is said: know that which is called Sannyasa to be Yoga. For no one can become a Yogi without the resolve to renounce. Thus, detachment or renunciation must be practiced properly. If one follows the wrong path by abandoning all work, it will not be considered true Sannyasa. As it is said:

"Monasticism or renunciation... they invented it seeking the pleasure of Allah. Yet they did not observe it as it should have been observed." (Al-Quran 57:27)

Verse 6.3 For a sage who wishes to ascend to Yoga (Yogarurukshu), action is said to be the means. But for one who has attained Yoga (Yogarudha), renunciation of action (quiescence) is said to be the means.

Verse 6.4 A person is said to have attained Yoga (Yogarudha) when he is attached neither to sense objects nor to actions, having renounced all worldly motives.

(Commentary 6.3-4) There are various stages of Yogic practice, such as Karma-yoga, Jnana-yoga, and Bhakti-yoga. The initial stage is called Yogarurukshu and the advanced stage is Yogarudha.

One who practices Yoga while remaining engaged in

action is called Yogarurukshu. In this state, one must continue Yogic practice while being active. In such practice, action is the primary foundation for attaining Yogic perfection.

On the other hand, for a Jnana-yogi or one who has attained Yogarudha, the renunciation of fruitive action is the means. This is a higher stage. At this level, the Yogi does not work for sensory pleasure; he does not desire the fruits of action. He remains resolved in total renunciation. Lord Krishna speaks on why one should practice Yoga or the purpose of Yogic practice:

Verse 6.5 One must deliver oneself by the strength of the Soul; one must not degrade the Soul. For the Soul is the friend of the Soul, and the Soul is also the enemy of the Soul.

Verse 6.6 For him who has conquered the Soul (lower self) by the Soul (higher self), the Soul is his friend. But for him who has failed to subdue the Soul, the Soul acts as an enemy, intent on harm.

(Commentary 6.5-6) By "Soul," the individual existence or identity of every being is meant. The Soul represents the "I." Therefore, no person should degrade the Soul or themselves. If such a possibility arises, it is one's duty to rescue oneself. Thus it is said: one must deliver oneself by

the Soul. As it is said:

"He has succeeded who purifies the soul, and he has failed who stunts it." (Al-Quran 91:9-10)

Both good and evil tendencies exist within the Soul (the individual). He who can subdue his evil tendencies and awaken his good tendencies becomes his own friend. He does not allow himself to be degraded. As it is said:

"And whoever purifies himself only purifies himself for the benefit of his own soul." (Al-Quran 35:18)

On the other hand, he who cannot subdue his evil tendencies becomes his own worst enemy. Deeds born of his lack of judgment bring about his own destruction. He destroys himself. The Soul then acts as an enemy to his harm. As it is said:

"Whoever Allah leaves to stray—no guide has he." (Al-Quran 16:37)

Due to ignorance, man follows the wrong path, does evil deeds, and engages in self-harm. On the other hand, knowledge helps a person recognize and know themselves. It assists in realizing the relationship with the Supreme Soul and brings proper understanding regarding the goal and purpose of life. Herein lies the importance of Yogic practice. When one becomes

absorbed in Samadhi through meditation, the knowledge of Truth reveals itself to the practitioner like daylight. He then does not allow himself to be degraded. He remains conscious and diligent in delivering himself. It is said:

"And Allah will surely help those who help Him. Indeed, Allah is Powerful and Exalted in Might." (Al-Quran 22:40)

Therefore, the Soul is its own friend and its own enemy. One must rescue oneself. No one else can rescue you.

Though the presentations differ, the core messages of all scriptures are the same. How can one recognize someone who has conquered the Soul or succeeded in Yogic practice?

Verse 6.7 The Supreme Soul of the self-controlled person who has conquered the Soul is steadfast in cold and heat, happiness and distress, and honor and dishonor.

Verse 6.8 A Yogi is said to be established in Yoga (Yogarudha) when his soul is satisfied by knowledge and self-realization, is unperturbed, and has conquered the senses. To him, a lump of earth, a stone, and gold are all the same.

Verse 6.9 He who is impartial toward well-wishers, friends, foes, the indifferent, the hateful, and relatives;

and is equal-minded toward the righteous and the sinners—he is even further advanced.

(Commentary 6.7) The heart of one who has conquered the Soul becomes tranquil. Peace always reigns within. The restlessness of the mind disappears. Such a person is not disturbed by dualities like cold and heat, happiness and distress, or honor and dishonor. He remains steady and unwavering in all conditions.

(Commentary 6.8) Due to self-knowledge and self-realization, the soul that feels satisfaction within itself and remains unperturbed or indifferent to worldly matters is linked in Yoga. He is called Yogarudha. He has conquered his senses. Therefore, sensory objects cannot agitate him.

In the eyes of a person in such a mental state, a pebble, a stone, and gold are all the same. He possesses equal vision. He makes no distinctions. To him, only the Supreme Lord is valuable; everything else is equal and valueless.

(Commentary 6.9) Some things are easy, like seeing a piece of gold and a lump of earth as the same. Some things are easy and natural, like being indifferent toward well-wishers and friends, because there is no fear of harm from them.

But those who are indifferent toward both enemies and friends, neutral toward the hateful and relatives, and look upon the righteous and the sinner with the same eye are extraordinary. Inwardly, he sees even an enemy as a friend—or as a fellow human being. An enemy may consider him a foe, which is the enemy's mental flaw. Those who possess such a vision are much further advanced on this path.

The Yogi does not see "saint" or "sinner." The Yogi sees everyone as a valuable being created by God. Everyone is performing their necessary actions in their respective places—actions that God has designated for them through some process. Therefore, his vision toward all is equal. He sees all creation with the same eye. He sees the saint and the sinner with equal vision.

Instead of seeing the sinner as a "sinner" or the evil as "evil," he gives more importance to the environment, circumstances, the capacity or incapacity of the being, and the limitations of their knowledge. He prioritizes the helplessness of the being. Therefore, he is sympathetic toward them and hopes they too return to the path of right knowledge. He prays for God's blessing upon them, or he may view these matters as divine play.

This equality or neutrality of thought and vision in all matters is what is called being "unperturbed" or

"indifferent" here. How is this equanimity attained?

This is possible because of knowing God as the source of everything. He knows that the same One resides within everyone. The Yogi sees God everywhere.

The Yogi keeps the mind constantly absorbed in the thought or meditation of God with one-pointed focus. This is called Samadhi. In fact, a true Yogi is always in Samadhi or meditation. What must one do to attain Samadhi? Lord Krishna says:

Verse 6.10 Staying alone in a secluded place, the Yogi should constantly engage himself in Samadhi. Keeping the mind restrained, being free from desire, and abandoning the sense of possession or ownership is desirable.

Verse 6.11 In a clean place, which is neither too high nor too low, one should establish a seat by spreading Kusha grass, with a deerskin over it and a cloth over that.

Verse 6.12 Sitting on that seat with a steady mind, restraining the activities of the senses and the mind, one should practice Yoga with one-pointed focus for the purification of the inner self.

Verse 6.13 Keeping the body, head, and neck in a straight line, remaining motionless and steady, fixing the gaze on

the tip of the nose without looking in any direction;

Verse 6.14 With a tranquil heart, being fearless and firm in the vow of celibacy (Brahmacharya), having the mind fully restrained, surrendering the heart to Me, and making Me the Supreme Goal, one should practice Yoga.

Verse 6.15 Always practicing thus, the Yogi, with his body, mind, and soul restrained, becomes free from material bondage and attains the peace that is situated in Me.

(Commentary 6.10) Making the mind one-pointed in constant thought of God is called Samadhi. To attain Samadhi, it is best to stay alone in a secluded place. One must carefully accept favorable environments and reject unfavorable ones. One must ensure the external environment does not cause irritation or hinder meditation but is conducive to concentration.

In addition to the external environment, the internal environment must also be favorable. One must be sinless and pure. The heart must be restrained from worldly thoughts. Sense objects must not disturb the mind in any way. A state of detachment toward objects must be maintained. One must not pay attention to sensory matters, or meditation will be hindered.

The sense of possession or ownership must be removed

from the heart. Its presence means there is an attachment to worldly things. One must be free from this. The Yogi knows that everything in the world belongs to God or Allah. Nothing is his own. As it is said:

"To Allah belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth." (Al-Quran 3:109)

Knowing this, one must keep oneself free from such states. One must abandon thoughts of everything except God; otherwise, worldly thoughts will disturb the heart. Then, with deep attention, one must meditate on the Soul. To attain Samadhi, one must develop the habit of Dhyana-yoga in this manner.

(Commentary 6.11-12) To meditate, one must sit on a seat in a clean and comfortable place. The heart must be kept steady and calm. One must practice Yoga with one-pointed focus primarily to purify the inner self by restraining the activities of the senses and the mind.

(Commentary 6.13-14) For the Yogic posture, one must sit keeping the body, head, and neck aligned. The gaze should be kept fixed. Looking in any direction is not desired. Keeping the mind restrained, one must sit on the seat with a motionless, steady, and tranquil heart. What will one do while sitting? One will try to enter Samadhi or meditation. What will they meditate on? By surrendering

the heart to God and knowing Him as the Supreme Goal, one must focus on His thought.

In this way, by being absorbed in meditation or Samadhi, one must try to know oneself. Who am I? Where and how did I come from? Who created me? What is my relationship with Him? How can that relationship be established? How can it be maintained? Why did He create the world? What is the purpose of creation? While meditated, one must try to find answers to various questions like these. In this way, one gradually moves forward on the path of attaining self-knowledge.

Through practice, the knowledge of Truth is revealed at some point. Like daylight, all mysteries become manifest. The practitioner reaches a steady conclusion. The knowledge of Truth makes the inner self firm and strong. Faith is born from the knowledge attained. One becomes steady and unwavering in faith. This is how self-confidence is built.

The supreme achievement of life is the self-confidence gained through practice. Self-confidence helps a person move forward. It helps in facing dangers. It rescues one from danger. It builds one into a person of firm resolve. Through self-confidence, a strong bond is created with the Supreme Soul, God, or Allah.

Humans work based on the desire for fruitive results. Fruitive enjoyment is the motivation for work. But a Sannyasi or Yogi works by renouncing the desire for fruitive results. Where does the motivation for the selfless action of a Sannyasi or Yogi come from? Surely they too must take refuge in something alternative, by sheltering in which they become capable of working even after renouncing all internal desires.

Their inspiration is the Supreme Lord, God, or Allah! Taking refuge in God or Allah, they renounce everything worldly, starting from the fruits of action. What a great sacrifice! It is not possible for an ordinary person to work this way. Herein lies the greatness of the Yogi and the Sannyasi!

What happens in their hearts that makes it possible for them to work this way? To be honest, even if someone wants to, they cannot work this way. That firmness of heart is established by the grace of God Himself. To hope for such fortune, one must remain constantly engaged in practice. One must always remember God. That is why one is told to sit in a Yogic posture, enter Samadhi, and meditate on the Supreme Lord. This is a means or path to attain God. That is why it is said:

"...and the remembrance of Allah is surely the greatest." (Al-Quran 29:45)

Due to the desire to meditate, a Yogi always prefers solitude and loneliness. Nothing is pleasing to him except the company of God or Allah. Such a pure devotee is a true Yogi. A Yogi always resides on a transcendental level. What is gained from this?

(Commentary 6.15) Attraction or pull toward the material world binds a person to worldly shackles. This gives rise to all types of sorrow and distress. The being suffers that agony. By practicing or cultivating Yoga in the mentioned way, the body, mind, and soul are restrained.

When the heart is restrained, the "disease of worldly existence" is cured. It becomes possible to remain free from the bondage of the material world. This liberation brings immense peace within. The Yogi then resides on a transcendental level and attains tranquility in the form of being situated in God. As it is said:

"...Indeed, by the remembrance of Allah do hearts find rest." (Al-Quran 13:28)

Lord Krishna says:

Verse 6.16 O Arjuna! Yoga is not for one who eats too much, nor for one who eats too little; it is not for one who sleeps too much, nor for one who stays awake too much.

Verse 6.17 He whose eating and recreation are regulated, whose efforts in work are moderate, and whose sleep and wakefulness are balanced—his Yoga results in the cessation of all miseries.

Verse 6.18 When the activities of the heart and mind are specially disciplined and, becoming free from all desires, one is firmly established in the Soul, then he is said to have attained Yoga.

(Commentary 6.16-17) Driven by the greed for sense gratification, people often overeat. However, the goal of Yoga is to restrain the senses. Consequently, a glutton breaks the primary condition of Yoga. Consuming more than what is necessary for survival is overeating. Yoga cannot be mastered by one who eats excessively.

On the other hand, the body requires strength, which comes from food. Therefore, a true Yogi does not resort to total fasting either, as that too hinders Yogic practice.

Excessive sleep brings laziness, and overeating often leads to excessive sleep. These obstacles impede primary duties. Yogis must be moderate in their food and sleep. Unless eating, sleeping, fear, and procreation are properly regulated, they act as barriers on the path of Yoga. Thus, it is said that for one whose eating, recreation, efforts, and sleep-wake cycles are moderate,

Yoga brings an end to all sorrows. Such a person is considered fit to attain Yoga.

(Commentary 6.18) The objective of Yoga is "attaining Yoga." What is that? It is successfully establishing a relationship with God. In the body, the Soul represents God. It is through the Soul that the connection with God is maintained. Therefore, Yoga means being able to be absorbed in the Soul.

A restless heart cannot focus on the Soul. Desires are the cause of mental restlessness. Thus, one must become indifferent toward desires. The mind must be disciplined, and the senses must be subdued. Yoga is the method of sense control. Only when desires cease and the tranquil heart is successfully established in the Soul can it be said that Yoga has been attained. What is the nature of a successful Yogi? Lord Krishna says:

Verse 6.19 As a lamp does not flicker in a windless place, such is the simile used for a Yogi who is practiced in restraining the mind through Yoga.

Verse 6.20 When the mind is withdrawn from material-worldly objects through the practice of Yoga and becomes quiet, the purified mind then finds satisfaction in realizing the self within the self.

Verse 6.21 In that state, the Yogi experiences supreme

happiness, which is grasped by the intellect and is beyond the reach of the senses. Once established in this, he never deviates from the truth of the Soul.

Verse 6.22 Upon gaining this state, no other gain is considered greater. Established in this, the Yogi is not shaken even by the heaviest of sorrows.

Verse 6.23 Know this state—which is the cessation of all miseries born of contact with the material world—to be Yoga. This Yoga should be practiced with determination and without despair.

(Commentary 6.19) In a completely windless place, the flame of a lamp does not flicker even a bit. This is a scientifically tested truth. The heart of a true Yogi remains similarly steady and unwavering. This is an illustration.

One who is practiced in restraining the mind through Yoga becomes established in a steady and firm state, like the lamp in the example. Worldly matters cannot deviate him from his goal, nor can they move him away from the thought of the Supreme Lord.

(Commentary 6.20) Success in Yogic practice brings detachment from material-worldly matters. Consequently, the mind ceases to dwell on worldly objects. Becoming free from attachment and impurity,

the Soul is transformed into a pure and sacred existence. At that point, no external stimulus is needed for inner peace. The practitioner feels satisfaction within themselves. The heart becomes deeply absorbed in the Soul. He becomes his own friend. By realizing the self within the self, the practitioner attains contentment.

Individual souls have no existence separate from the touch of the Supreme Soul. Therefore, the Yogi in Samadhi feels the Supreme Soul in his heart and experiences the highest satisfaction.

(Commentary 6.21-23) In this state, supreme happiness is felt. But that happiness cannot be seen by the senses; it is felt through knowledge. In this state, the Yogi is able to realize the true nature of the Soul. No worldly matter can then delude, agitate, or attract him.

Once this state is attained, it is felt that there is nothing safer or more blissful in anything else. No one wishes to abandon this feeling of bliss. The practitioner always feels complete in this state. As a result, the Yogi does not become agitated or hopeless even in sorrow. He knows how to keep himself steady and unwavering.

The state of remaining steady amidst all the miseries born of contact with the material world is called the cessation of sorrow. In this state, one gains true liberation from all

agony. In a true sense, this is called Yoga. Here, Yoga reaches its perfection. In this state, "transcendental bliss" is experienced. This is the ultimate goal of Yoga.

To gain liberation from worldly agony and to attain transcendental bliss, one must practice this Yoga with perseverance. Even if success is not immediate, one is told to continue the effort to reach the goal without losing heart. How should this Yoga be practiced?

Verse 6.24 By abandoning all desires with unwavering perseverance and completely controlling the senses through the mind, one should practice the method of Yoga.

Verse 6.25 With the intellect supported by patience, one should gradually withdraw the mind and fix it upon the Soul. One should think of nothing else.

Verse 6.26 From whatever objects the restless and unsteady mind wanders, one must certainly withdraw it and bring it back under the control of the Soul.

(Commentary 6.24-26) It is said that for Yogic practice, one must abandon all desires. This task is not easy at all. For this, one must persist with unwavering perseverance. The senses must be brought under complete control through the mind. This is how Yoga is practiced.

Using the intellect and with patience, the mind must be gradually withdrawn from attachment to objects and established in the Soul. In this state, no other thoughts should be entertained. The mind must be brought under control by withdrawing it from all those things that make it restless and unsteady.

It is desirable to practice Yoga with unwavering perseverance and patience. The technique by which the heart is kept calm and one becomes self-absorbed to uncover one's true nature is Yoga. What result will be obtained?

Verse 6.27 The Yogi whose mind is tranquil, whose passion (Rajas) is subsided, who is sinless and has attained the nature of Brahman, reaches the highest happiness.

Verse 6.28 Thus constantly engaging the Soul and becoming free from all impurities, the Yogi easily attains the supreme bliss of contact with Brahman.

(Commentary 6.27-28) Passion (Rajas) makes the heart restless. It creates desires and is the primary cause of sensory excitement. Under the influence of Rajas, man steps toward sin or evil paths. Through Yogic practice, the Yogi's passion is subsided. When passion subsides, the body and mind become calm, and a sinless state

emerges. In this state, the Yogi experiences a feeling of happiness.

The Yogi always remains connected to the Soul in this way, or it can be said he remains in Samadhi. Carrying the feeling of liberation from all impurities, he attains the supreme bliss of contact with Brahman in this very world. This state is called the "Brahman-realized" state (Brahma-bhuta)—meaning Brahman-consciousness. Attaining pure Brahman-bliss is the fruit of Yogic perfection.

In reality, the feeling of wrongdoing, fault, or sin robs a person of mental joy. It decays or damages a person mentally. When the Brahman-state is attained as a result of Yogic perfection, this feeling of sin no longer exists. A sense of faultlessness arises within oneself in relation to everything in the world. One feels pure and sacred to oneself. Essentially, this state of the mind and brain provides the sensation of happiness. It becomes possible to experience supreme bliss even while living in this world, although it cannot be understood or seen from the outside. Only a successful Yogi can feel it. When the state of Brahman is attained, what else happens?

Verse 6.29 A Yogi, with equal vision, sees the same Supreme Soul in all beings and sees all beings in that same Soul.

Verse 6.30 For one who sees Me everywhere and sees everything in Me, I am never lost to him, nor is he ever lost to Me.

(Commentary 6.29-30) In this state, the Yogi sees all beings in one Soul. He sees the existence of everything within God. Again, he sees the same Supreme Soul in all beings. In essence, the Yogi sees God everywhere. As it is said:

"O mankind! Be dutiful to your Lord, Who created you from a single soul..." (Al-Quran 4:1)

"...and He is with you wherever you are." (Al-Quran 57:4)

"To Allah belong the East and the West. So wherever you turn, there is the Face of Allah. Indeed, Allah is all-Encompassing and all-Knowing." (Al-Quran 2:115)

The Yogi sees that all beings are connected to the same Supreme Soul. In his heart, the Yogi always feels connected to that Great or Supreme Soul. The Yogi realizes the eternal relationship that exists between a being and God.

Once this matter is captured by one's knowledge in this way, that knowledge is never lost. As a result, God is never hidden from his sight. He always exists in contact with Brahman. Similarly, the Yogi is never lost to God.

Verse 6.31 He who, established in unity, worships Me as residing in all beings—that Yogi resides in Me, whatever his mode of life.

Verse 6.32 O Arjuna! He who judges the happiness and distress of all beings by the same standard as his own is considered the highest Yogi.

(Commentary 6.31-32) God is One. Therefore, the Yogi sees that all beings are connected to the same Supreme Soul. Again, he sees that only God exists in all beings. Because of such a perspective, he himself resides within God and feels that God resides within him.

Knowing God as the cause of all causes, the Yogi worships only God and resides in God. But where can God be found?

One who sees all beings in the same Supreme Soul, or sees the same Supreme Soul in all beings, sees God in all things. Therefore, he becomes equal-visioned toward all. Thus, the Yogi serves all beings. This is the inspiration for Karma-yoga.

The Yogi, therefore, considers the happiness and distress of others as his own. He sees that although beings are in different situations according to their Karma, they are in God in all conditions, and God is in them. In their respective positions, everyone is engaged in His work,

i.e., the welfare of creation. Such a Yogi, endowed with equal vision toward all, is the greatest Yogi.

The goal of Yoga is to establish a relationship with God. The heart of the constantly connected Yogi sees everything as God-conscious or Allah-conscious. But is it possible to develop the mind required for this perspective? Arjuna asks Krishna:

Verse 6.33 O Madhusudana! Due to the restlessness of the mind, I do not see any permanent stability in this system of Yoga based on equality that You have described.

Verse 6.34 O Krishna! The mind is truly restless, turbulent, stubborn, and very strong; to restrain it and bring it under control seems even more difficult than controlling the wind.

(Commentary 6.33-34) Remaining equally unwavering in good and bad, cold and heat, happiness and distress; judging the happiness and distress of all beings as one's own; seeing friends and enemies as the same—Arjuna feels that this system of Yoga based on equality is not realistic at all. There is an "I-ness" (ego) within everyone. The mind is completely restless, turbulent, stubborn, and uncontrollable. Using it to remove "I-ness" and establish equal vision seems almost impossible.

Even if a show of equal vision is made artificially, it cannot be done from the heart. In reality, humans cannot achieve this. It is difficult to subdue or control the mind. Arjuna sees no practical basis or stability in this Yoga philosophy. Lord Krishna says:

Verse 6.35 O mighty-armed one! Undoubtedly the mind is difficult to curb and restless. But, O son of Kunti, it can be restrained by constant practice and by detachment.

Verse 6.36 For one whose mind is unbridled, Yoga is hard to attain—this is My opinion. However, for one who has brought the mind under control, it can be attained by practicing through the proper means.

(Commentary 6.35-36) Lord Krishna says: undoubtedly the mind is difficult to curb and restless. There is no doubt about it. But there is a way. One cannot be situated in Yoga with an unbridled and uncontrolled mind. Therefore, the mind must first be disciplined. By practicing through the proper means, it is possible.

The mind can be subdued through constant cultivation or practice (Abhyasa) and detachment (Vairagya). Through practice, even the most difficult tasks are accomplished. Yoga is essentially the cultivation of several good habits. That is why it is also called Abhyasa-yoga. Habit turns into nature. Good habits play a role in forming a good nature.

Through practice, it is possible to calm a restless heart.

On the other hand, Vairagya is the lack of attachment to sense objects and attraction toward God. When one is free from worldly attachment or desires, the mind becomes calm. In a calm mind, attaining Yoga becomes possible.

Therefore, one must try to connect with Yoga by utilizing these two: practice and detachment. Lord Krishna says it is possible to subdue the mind if one practices through the proper means. Arjuna asks:

Verse 6.37 O Krishna! What is the fate of one who begins the path of Yoga with sincerity but, due to lack of effort, deviates from it and fails to reach perfection?

Verse 6.38 O mighty-armed one! Falling away from the path of Brahman, does he not perish like a broken cloud, having lost both paths and being without any support?

Verse 6.39 O Krishna! This is my doubt, which only You can completely remove. There is no one else besides You who can dispel this doubt.

(Commentary 6.37-39) Arjuna wants to know: if someone starts practicing Yoga with devotion but, due to negligence or some fault, deviates and fails to reach perfection, what is his fate? Falling away from the path of

Brahman, does he not lose both paths? That is, failing in Yoga, he fails to attain salvation (Moksha), and by renouncing fruitive actions to enter Yoga, he also fails to attain heaven. Consequently, does he not vanish like a broken cloud?

During the crisis of the Kurukshetra war, as Krishna discusses Yoga and transcendental knowledge, the consciousness for practicing Yoga is deeply awakened in Arjuna's mind. But he himself is not sure if such consciousness will remain in him later. As a result, a doubt has arisen within: even if an effort for Yoga is made, if at any point he deviates due to mental weakness or changed circumstances, will he not lose both paths? Will he not lose everything and become scattered like a broken cloud?

He wants to decide on this matter by hearing it directly from the mouth of Shri Krishna Himself. He believes no one other than Krishna can properly inform him about this. Lord Krishna says:

Verse 6.40 The Blessed Lord said: O Partha! Never is there destruction for him, neither in this world nor in the next. For anyone who performs auspicious work, O My friend, never comes to a bad end.

Verse 6.41 The unsuccessful Yogi, after dwelling for

many years in the worlds of the righteous, is born again into a home of the pure or the illustrious.

Verse 6.42 Or he is born into a family of wise Yogis. Verily, such a birth is very difficult to obtain in this world.

Verse 6.43 There, he regains the divine consciousness and intellect belonging to his previous life. Then, he strives again for perfection with greater effort, O son of the Kurus!

Verse 6.44 By virtue of his previous practice, he is automatically attracted to Yoga. Such an inquirer of Yoga even transcends the ritualistic principles of the Vedas.

Verse 6.45 Practicing with greater effort than in previous lives, such a Yogi, becoming purified of all sins and perfected through many births, finally attains the Supreme Goal.

(Commentary 6.40) Those who practice Yoga perform their actions selflessly. No self-interest exists there. Selfless action (Nishkama-karma) is inherently for the welfare of all. No one who performs auspicious work ever meets with a disastrous end.

Even if one fails in such noble work, they do not become unacceptable in this world. Human sympathy remains with them. Since divine qualities exist within humans, God

also does not allow such a practitioner to perish. He provides the opportunity to move forward again with compassion. They face destruction neither in this life nor in the life hereafter.

(Commentary 6.41-42) It is said that the unsuccessful Yogi goes to the higher worlds of the righteous. These matters are related to faith. After residing there for a long time and enjoying various pleasures, they return to this world. Because complete detachment was not achieved at the time of death, or because of lingering worldly cravings, they are born into virtuous, illustrious, or wealthy families so that those cravings may be satisfied.

On the other hand, one who had achieved detachment is born into a family of Yogis or wise men, and such a birth is extremely rare. Being in the presence of a true Yogi creates the possibility of attaining the Supreme Goal.

Therefore, it is seen that only after the inner desires are satisfied can a person be elevated to the stage of attaining perfection. If latent or unsatisfied worldly desires remain, the mind cannot focus on practice, success cannot be reached, and liberation is not attained.

(Commentary 6.43-45) Due to such a birth, the Yogi regains the connection to the divine intellect and knowledge of his previous life. Then, he can strive again

for perfection with renewed effort. By being born into a religious or noble family, they also obtain an environment suitable for spiritual practice.

Because of previous habits, he is automatically attracted to Yoga in the next life and even transcends the fruitive results of Vedic rituals. Such a person can act by rising above the formal rules of practice.

As a result of being born this way, they become more diligent than in many previous births combined, becoming free from all sins and purified to attain perfection. Finally, they reach the Supreme Goal. This is the process of achieving the objective. Regarding the status of a Yogi, Lord Krishna says:

Verse 6.46 A Yogi is superior to the ascetic (Tapasvi), superior to the man of knowledge (Jnani), and superior to the man of action (Karmi). Therefore, O Arjuna, be a Yogi!

Verse 6.47 And of all Yogis, he whose inner self is always lost in Me, and who worships Me with faith—he is the most intimately united with Me. This is My opinion.

(Commentary 6.46) Voluntarily accepting physical hardship is called Tapasya (asceticism). In the hope of reaching God, an ascetic willingly embraces various sufferings, even causing pain to their own body.

Sometimes these are done arbitrarily even if not mentioned in scripture, though all are done for the sake of God.

A Yogi is also an ascetic, but the Yogi performs penance with proper knowledge. He does nothing by giving the body unnecessary or exaggerated pain. God does not manifest Himself in a body tortured by distress. Therefore, a Yogi is superior to an ascetic.

On the other hand, the pursuit of knowledge is futile if it cannot be linked to God. Essentially, through all actions, we seek God and perform His work or worship. If this knowledge does not lead to realization, then that knowledge becomes aimless. Such knowledge cannot bring welfare to the individual or society. Generally, all "men of knowledge" do not possess this realization.

A Yogi is also a man of knowledge, but the Yogi also possesses knowledge regarding the science of the Soul and the Supreme Goal. His knowledge has a connection with God and the ultimate purpose of life and the universe. Thus, the Yogi is superior to the Jnani.

By "men of action" (Karmi), we usually mean those who work for results. They perform rituals and sacrifices with the desire for worldly or heavenly rewards. Those who work for a return cannot be considered high-level from a

mental perspective.

A Yogi is also a man of action, but the Yogi works by abandoning likes and dislikes, greed, attachment, and ego. He works for the welfare of life and the world while keeping God in mind. Therefore, the Yogi is superior to the Karmi.

Considering all aspects, a Yogi is superior to a saint or ascetic, superior to the man of knowledge, and above the man of action. That is why Lord Krishna tells Arjuna to be a Yogi in all circumstances—the best among men.

(Commentary 6.47) Among all Yogis, he who is always absorbed in God, remembers God, and worships Him with proper devotion and faith is the most intimately connected with God. As it is said:

"O you who have believed, remember Allah with much remembrance and exalt Him morning and afternoon." (Al-Quran 33:41-42)

The question may arise: why have quotations from the Quran been included? In reality, all scriptures speak the same truth. The truth is that the Creator is One, and the path shown by Him is also one. One must only try to understand the core meanings with deep attention.

Chapter 7: Jnana-Vijnana Yoga

(Yoga through Knowledge and Realization)

(Total Verses: 30)

Summary: When one becomes aware of the true nature and majesty of God through proper knowledge, faith and devotion are born. It is then that people engage in His worship. Through worship and spiritual practice, it is possible to become purified of sins and attain His proximity.

In **Jnana-Vijnana Yoga**, a scientific concept of God is presented. By knowing this, humans can grasp the greatness of God. One acquires the knowledge to attain His nature and, through practice, can become free from the bonds of the material world. Therefore, there is no

need to renounce work. It is possible to attain liberation from bondage even while performing actions, provided they are guided by proper knowledge.

Verses and Commentary

Verse 7.1 The Blessed Lord said: O Partha! Now hear how, by practicing Yoga with your mind attached to Me and taking refuge in Me, you can know Me completely and without any doubt.

Verse 7.2 I shall now declare to you in full this knowledge, both phenomenal and noumenal (Vijnana). Once this is known, nothing else shall remain to be known in this world.

(Commentary 7.1-2) The world is permeated by God. There is nothing here apart from Him. Everything in the universe exists by taking refuge in Him. He pervades everything, and everything is situated within Him. Whatever we see around us is but His various opulences, qualities, powers, and manifestations. Therefore, knowing Him as the sole refuge, one must strive to know Him through Yoga.

To know God, one must focus deeply on Him. Being situated in Yoga and knowing God as the only goal, one must become absorbed in meditation on Him. This is why

being "connected in Yoga" is emphasized. Yoga is that "skill in action" or technique through which, by meditation and effort, one can attain comprehensive and scientific knowledge of God. In fact, whatever we learn or discover through knowledge and research is essentially a way of knowing God; we discover God bit by bit.

It should be noted that "being meditative" here does not only refer to traditional Samadhi. In the modern age, scientific knowledge and research-oriented work should also be considered a form of meditation. The scientific technique used to achieve a goal is also an integral part of Yoga. Subjects must be understood in this light.

Lord Krishna informs Arjuna of that scientific knowledge regarding God. He presents the comprehensive nature of God's various manifestations, such as the material and the conscious, the manifest and the unmanifest, and the saguna (with attributes) and nirguna (without attributes). These are the fundamental principles of science—the very knowledge upon which modern science has progressed so far.

Everything we study or discover in this world, even scientific research, is essentially aimed at unveiling the nature of God. In the modern era, every branch of science performs this task systematically. That is why the

term "scientific knowledge" is used here. Fundamental and primary subjects of the science of creation are presented here, forming the foundation of human progress.

To attain anything, one must have an interest in it. To attain God, one must have an interest in knowing Him. This is what is meant by "having the mind attached to God." Lord Krishna says:

Verse 7.3 Out of thousands of men, hardly one strives for perfection; and among those who strive and attain perfection, hardly one knows Me in truth.

(Commentary 7.3) In reality, it is seen that out of thousands of people, only a few are interested or strive for transcendental, spiritual, or God-related knowledge. Among those thousands who strive for perfection and believe they have attained it, perhaps only one truly knows God in essence (Tattvatah). Thus, we see that throughout history, the number of people through whom we have learned about the immense grace of God/Allah—from science to various worldly matters—is very small among billions.

Knowing and understanding God is not a simple matter. The Supreme Being is beyond even the knowledge of Brahman and Paramatman. He is the embodiment of

knowledge; He is science itself. When God is pleased by the devotion of a devotee, He reveals Himself to them. Such a person is fortunate. Only such a fortunate person can understand the profound mysteries.

This knowledge is extremely significant and scientific. It may not be easily understood by everyone. Here, the basic and primary concepts regarding the mystery of the creation of life and the universe are presented. Lord Krishna says to Arjuna:

Verse 7.4 Earth, water, fire, air, ether, mind, intellect, and ego—these are the eightfold divisions of My separated material energy (Prakriti).

Verse 7.5 This is My lower nature (Apara-prakriti). But know, O mighty-armed one, that there is another, superior nature of Mine, which comprises the living beings by whom this material world is sustained.

(Commentary 7.4) The full manifestation of God can only be properly known through scientific and analytical knowledge. The analytical discussions and research of Sankhya philosophy or modern science are highly applicable here. Truth be told, modern science primarily researches and analyzes the various energies/principles of God and attempts to uncover His nature.

To know about God in the light of Sankhya, one must

have knowledge of Prakriti (Nature) and Purusha (Consciousness). According to Sankhya, these are the two fundamental principles. No one knows the beginning or end of Nature; hence, Prakriti is called beginningless and infinite. All the fundamental elements of universal creation are inherent within Nature. Nature itself creates the world. In the overall process of creation, Nature is called the primary cause.

It should be noted that the word Purusha is not used here in a gendered sense. It refers to the "holder of life" or the "soul entity," regardless of male or female.

It is said that earth, water, fire, air, and ether are the five "gross energies." Together, they are called the Pancha-mahabhuta. Ego, intellect, and mind are the "subtle energies." Together, the gross and subtle energies constitute primordial Nature.

In the unmanifest state, the three qualities of material nature—Sattva (goodness), Rajas (passion), and Tamas (ignorance)—are considered primary. In that consideration, ego, intellect, and the primary nature are seen as part of the core Prakriti.

Thus, God's total energy or nature is divided into these eight (or ten, if considering the three gunas) parts. This is the lower-level nature of God, known as material nature

(Jada-prakriti). In the Gita, it is called **Apara-prakriti**.

Every living being, including humans, has a body. This body is the lower-level material nature mentioned above. Similarly, this vast universe also has a lower-level nature, which is the material world we see and live in.

These material energies of God are the primary subject of Sankhya. Sankhya philosophy is often seen as atheistic and materialistic. Materialists do not give much importance to ego, intellect, and mind. In physical science, these fundamental principles or subjects exist. (See Gita 13.6).

(Commentary 7.5) Apart from the lower nature mentioned above, God has another nature or energy. This is called the supreme or superior nature (Para-prakriti). This is the conscious nature of God in the form of living beings (Jiva-bhuta). It is due to the influence of this superior nature that the world remains dynamic and active. It is what sustains this material world.

When the superior energy (the living soul) enjoys the inferior gross and subtle energies, it forgets its true nature (mind and intellect) and becomes influenced by material nature. These principles fall under Sankhya scripture.

According to Sankhya, only Nature is active, and the

Purusha (soul) is passive. In Vedanta scripture, this Nature is called Maya or "the field" (Kshetra), and the passive soul is called the attribute-less Brahman or "the knower of the field" (Kshetrajna). In the Gita, these are referred to as Apara and Para Prakriti, respectively.

In every material body, even in the human body, there exists a conscious energy of God's higher nature. This is known as the individual soul (Jivatma). The soul is the true identity of the living being.

Similarly, this vast universe also has a conscious, superior, or supreme nature. The manifestation of this vast universe is a combination of both material and conscious energies—both are energies of God. The cause of the expansion of this great universe is the Supreme Soul (Paramatman). God is the cause of both the individual soul and the Supreme Soul, the small and the great. Just as the material body of a living being changes and develops, so does the universe change and expand. As it is said:

"And the heaven We constructed with strength, and indeed, We are [its] expander." (Al-Quran 51:47)

Verse 7.6 Know that all beings have their birth in this twofold nature. I am the source of the entire universe as well as its dissolution.

Verse 7.7 O Dhananjaya (Arjuna)! There is nothing superior to Me. Everything is strung upon Me like pearls on a thread.

(Commentary 7.6) Matter and Consciousness are the two energies of God. God is the cause of all creation. Everything in the world originates from the two aforementioned natures. Material nature takes the form of the body, while the supreme nature takes the form of the conscious living entity. Both natures are born from God. He is the source of everything. He is the cause of creation. As it is said:

"Allah is the Creator of the heavens and the earth!" (Al-Quran 2:117)

It is noteworthy that the three qualities of nature—Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas—are known as the Triguna. The nature of Sattva is manifestation or knowledge (Harmony); the nature of Rajas is activity or passion (Energy, Activity); and the nature of Tamas is non-manifestation or delusion (Resistance, Inertia). These three qualities are mutually contradictory.

The state of equilibrium of these three qualities is the unmanifest state of nature. During dissolution (Pralaya), these three stay in equilibrium. For example, in inanimate matter, the qualities of Sattva and Rajas are completely

covered by Tamas. During creation, this balance is broken. In some places Sattva becomes dominant, in others Rajas or Tamas. The first transformation caused by this imbalance at the start of creation is called Mahat-tattva.

The transformation of Mahat-tattva is the Ego (Ahankara). The Ego, through its own power, begins to create different substances. Its growth splits into two branches, creating sentient and insentient objects.

On one hand, through the excellence of Sattva, the eleven senses are created: the five organs of action (hands, feet, speech, anus, and genitals), the five organs of perception (eyes, ears, nose, tongue, and skin), and the dual-sense, the mind.

On the other hand, through the dominance of Tamas, the five subtle elements are produced. From there, the five gross elements—ether, air, fire, water, and earth—are created. The material world results from the transformation of these gross elements.

Nature is inert. Consciousness dawns in Nature through the proximity of the living entity (Jiva). Therefore, Nature (Prakriti) and the Soul (Purusha) are the fundamental principles. The material world is a temporary manifestation of one of God's infinite energies. God is the

primary or original cause of this material world's creation. All the components of material creation are His various energies. It is remarkable that long before the unimaginable progress of modern science, these fundamental scientific concepts were provided in the scriptures.

Just as God is the cause of the universe's origin, He is also the cause of its dissolution. When one is able to rise above this bondage-like Nature, the Great Dissolution (Mahapralaya) is also God.

No one knows for certain what, when, or how dissolution occurs. Because it is unknown, it is a matter of faith. Scientists are trying to understand it. However, a concept regarding dissolution exists. God is the cause of both creation and destruction. He is the beginning; He is the end. He is the Cause of all causes. Regarding dissolution, it has been said:

"Has there come to you the news of the Overwhelming (Event)? ... So remind them." (Al-Quran 88:1, 21)

"Fear a Day when no father will avail his son, nor will a son avail his father at all." (Al-Quran 31:33)

"And the angels will be on its edges. And eight (angels) will bear the Throne of your Lord above them that Day." (Al-Quran 69:17)

(Commentary 7.7) There is no one and nothing, no truth, above God. He is the Ultimate Truth. He is supreme in everything. As it is said:

"There is none comparable to Allah." (Al-Quran 112:4)

Like a tree or a net, He has extended all His powers to sustain everything in the world. Thus, it is said that everything is situated in Him like pearls strung on a thread. The concept of His primary energies was given above. Everything in the world is made real by the existence of God. Essentially, the world is permeated by God. Providing that concept, it is said:

Verse 7.8 O son of Kunti! I am the taste in water, the light of the moon and the sun; I am the syllable Om in all the Vedas, the sound in ether, and the ability in man.

Verse 7.9 I am the pure fragrance of the earth and the brilliance in fire; I am the life in all beings and the penance of the ascetics.

Verse 7.10 O Partha! Know Me as the eternal seed of all beings. I am the intelligence of the intelligent and the prowess of the powerful.

Verse 7.11 I am the strength of the strong, devoid of passion and attachment. O best of the Bharatas! In all beings, I am the desire (Kama) that is not contrary to

Dharma.

(Commentary 7.8) This world is permeated by God. Whatever exists in the world originates from Him. His various energies are spread everywhere like a net. Without Him, nothing has any existence.

It is said that the taste in water comes from God. The radiance of the sun and moon is also a manifestation of God's power. He is the source of the sacred syllable Om (Pranava), the transcendental sound used to address God at the start of Vedic mantras. The flow of all power within living beings and matter comes from God. That is, His power is manifested through specific forms or opulences (Vibhuti). The opulences are merely carriers of His specific power. For instance, consider carbohydrate as a source of energy; but paddy, rice, and wheat are the carriers of that energy. This is a gross example used for the sake of understanding, for the original power lies much deeper. God remains behind many veils. He is greater than the greatest and smaller than the smallest. Truly, reaching God is not easy.

To know God, one must grasp His various energies and qualities. He must be realized through the manifestation of His qualities and powers. A brief idea is given here of how God pervades everywhere through material and conscious energies. As it is said:

"Allah! ... To Him belong the best names." (Al-Quran 20:8)

Whether we say Ishwar, Bhagavan, Allah, or God, all His names are beautiful, majestic, and significant. His qualities, glory, and opulence are manifested within His names. His power and ability are manifested through His qualities. In the Al-Quran, many majestic names of Allah are mentioned in this way.

Whatever research science performs is essentially researching His energies to know God. The primary beginning, concept, and inspiration for this come from the scriptures. These books provide fundamental concepts or directions on all matters.

(Commentary 7.9) Every object has its own scent and taste. God Himself is that characteristic within everything. Whether we speak of taste or scent, God is the cause of the chemical or physical properties of all things.

The manifestation of life in all beings is also God. In fact, He is Life. He alone is the Living, the Everlasting! Others are alive by His touch. If the connection is severed, everything becomes lifeless. It is said:

"Allah! ... He is the Living, the Eternal." (Al-Quran 2:255)

(Commentary 7.10) God is the seed of all living beings.

Everything originates from Him. He is the Creator. He is the Sustainer.

God is the source of all intelligence or knowledge in living beings. All knowledge and intellect come from Him; otherwise, no one has their own intellect. He is the source of all intellectual power. He is also the source of the brilliance found in the brilliant.

(Commentary 7.11) Kama (desire) is the intense longing for something unobtained, and Raga (attachment/passion) is the intense longing for something already obtained. God is the source of the strength of those who are free from such passion and attachment. Passion and attachment try to pull a living being toward their path through their own attraction. They cannot be easily resisted. But the strength of the force that makes it possible to resist them is God Himself. Only through the thought of God can passion and attachment be suppressed. This intense pull or attraction cannot be suppressed by anything else.

On the other hand, God Himself is the source of the procreative desire (Kama) in all beings. Sexual life is not actually contrary to religion. Desire or sexual life is extremely necessary to maintain the continuity of the human race and to keep the body and mind healthy and pure. This procreative instinct sustains generations.

Because this instinct exists, society and families survive. The primary consideration is ensuring the proper use of this instinct. Giving birth to good children is one of its main purposes. But if sexual life is led only for sense gratification, it is considered a waste or an excess.

The duty of parents is to give birth to healthy children and to raise them to be knowledgeable and righteous, following the path of truth and justice. Thus, it is said:

"Your wives are a tilth for you; so go to your tilth when you will, and send (good deeds) before you for your souls." (Al-Quran 2:223)

Verse 7.12 Know that all states of being—whether of goodness (Sattva), passion (Rajas), or ignorance (Tamas)—are manifested by My energy. I am not in them, but they are in Me.

Verse 7.13 Deluded by these three states (Gunas), the entire world does not know Me, who am above these qualities and inexhaustible.

Verse 7.14 This divine Maya (illusion) of Mine, consisting of the three Gunas, is difficult to overcome. But those who take refuge in Me alone cross over this Maya.

(Commentary 7.12) Everything originates from God. The states of goodness (Sattva), passion (Rajas), and

ignorance (Tamas) of material nature also come from God. Living beings, influenced by these three qualities, become bound by actions in this world. Liberation (Mukti) refers to the freedom of humans from this bondage.

Although they originate from God, He exists beyond or above these qualities. That is, He is Nirguna (attribute-less). The qualities cannot influence Him. This is one of His unique characteristics. Humans are told to acquire this very quality of being unaffected. Only then can one become free from material bondage and attain the state of Brahman, returning to one's true nature. As it is said:

"Indeed, Allah is free from need of the worlds." (Al-Quran 3:97, 29:6)

God is the creator of the qualities, but they cannot influence or bind Him. He moves freely, independent of His creation.

It should be noted that the characteristics of Sattva are knowledge and detachment; Rajas are greed, pride, and exuberance; and Tamas are grief, delusion, sleep, and laziness. God has nothing to gain from these states. He is indifferent to these matters. Thus, the qualities cannot attract or influence God.

(Commentary 7.13) On the other hand, living beings in the material world cannot keep themselves free from the

influence of the three qualities. They fall under the sway of one quality or another and, being deluded and confused, become bound to their innate actions. As a result, a deluded soul cannot even conceive that something can exist free from the influence of the three qualities. It is not possible for a bound soul to realize the state beyond its capacity, the Nirguna state. Therefore, they cannot understand God, who is above all qualities.

(Commentary 7.14) This creative Maya of God, consisting of the three qualities, is difficult to transcend. However, Krishna says there is a way to overcome it. Those who worship only God can cross over it.

What does this "worship" (Bhajans) mean? First, one must know and understand God. Therefore, transcendental or spiritual knowledge must be acquired. Merely acquiring knowledge is not enough; one must believe it with heart and soul. One must hold that truth within themselves. Then, one must practice following the path shown for attaining perfection. Through practice, it is possible to achieve results, though success depends on God's will and grace.

In the scriptures, specific types of work and methods of worship are defined according to the different qualities. The goal of all practice is to suppress the qualities of Tamas and Rajas and become situated in Sattva. Among

the qualities, Sattva is the best and is conducive to liberation, though it is not the state of complete liberation. The goal is to transcend even Sattva and become situated above all three qualities. Only then can one be free from the bondage of nature and attain the nature of Brahman. It is noteworthy that the step after "humanity" is attaining "Brahman-hood." Krishna says:

Verse 7.15 The evil-doers, the deluded, the lowest of men, whose knowledge is stolen by Maya and who partake of the nature of demons, do not worship Me.

Verse 7.16 O best of the Bharatas, Arjuna! Four kinds of virtuous men worship Me: the distressed, the seeker of knowledge, the seeker of wealth, and the man of wisdom.

Verse 7.17 Of these, the man of wisdom (Jnani) who is constantly engaged in Me with single-minded devotion is the best. For I am extremely dear to him, and he is dear to Me.

Verse 7.18 All these are indeed noble, but the man of wisdom, I consider to be My very self. For, being united with Me, he has taken refuge in Me alone as the supreme goal. This is My opinion.

Verse 7.19 After many births, the man of wisdom takes refuge in Me, knowing that "Vasudeva is all." Such a great soul is very rare.

(Commentary 7.15) Those with sinful hearts, the witless, and the lowest of men do not worship God. To worship God, one must have a correct concept or knowledge of Him and be aware of His majesty. Only then will faith be established. But due to ignorance in spiritual matters, such people do not know the purpose of life. They do not understand what should be done.

Failing into the clutches of worldly attachment or Maya, their knowledge is stolen such that they become stuck in this world. High-level thoughts do not enter them. Since they do not think about the consequences of their actions, there is no evil deed they cannot perform. They attain a demonic nature. Such people, let alone worshiping, even harbor malice toward God. Therefore, they do not worship Him. Regarding them, it is said:

"Indeed, the worst of living creatures in the sight of Allah are those who have disbelieved, and they will not believe." (Al-Quran 8:55)

"Those who disbelieve enjoy themselves and eat as grazing livestock eat... Indeed, you deniers are among the guilty." (Al-Quran 47:12, 77:46)

(Commentary 7.16) So, who worships God? It is said that four types of people worship or remember God: the distressed/afflicted, the seeker of knowledge (Jijnasu),

the seeker of wealth/prosperity, and the man of wisdom (Jnani).

The distressed and oppressed are forced to remember God when they become helpless. Even if forced, they believe in God; thus, they remember God in danger or for their needs.

The seeker of wealth remembers God for his own desires and sense gratification. Even if it is for his own cravings, he is compelled to remember God. That is, he acknowledges and believes in God.

On the other hand, the demonic or the unbelievers do not remember God at all; rather, they harbor denial and malice. They do not believe in God and have no faith in the results of actions.

The seeker of knowledge (Jijnasu) remembers Him with an interest in the mystery of creation or in knowing God. For that reason, they sacrifice much comfort. If the seeker persists, they eventually turn into a man of wisdom (Tattvajna).

The true man of wisdom knows the deep mysteries. They are true believers because of their knowledge of the truth. They know that God is the creator and destroyer of life and the world. He is the Lord or Sustainer. They are grateful to God for His infinite grace. Out of a grateful

heart, they worship only God. It is said:

"And if you should count the favors of Allah, you could not enumerate them." (Al-Quran 16:18)

(Commentary 7.17) If a believer is wise, he is most dear to God. He is not like one who follows blindly; rather, he becomes a devotee because of knowledge and performs his duty toward Him. Whatever he does, he does with understanding and by knowing the truth. He does not act blindly.

A man of wisdom is much further ahead than others in knowledge of creation, life, and the world. Because he possesses deep knowledge, he believes in God. Due to his knowledge of the truth, he turns into a devotee. Therefore, he remembers God. Among devotees, he who believes because of knowledge is the best. For he does not remember God in hope of getting something desirable. Without any reward or exchange, he remembers God solely due to the knowledge of truth.

God says, as one loves Me, so I love him. God also loves them similarly or even more. As it is said:

"Allah will raise those who have believed among you and those who were given knowledge, by degrees." (Al-Quran 58:11)

Those who work for results (Sakama Karmi) desire everything in this life and the hereafter. They want God, but they also desire prosperity in the world. They do not only seek refuge in God; they also pray to various deities out of greed for wealth. Yet God knows even the inner thoughts of everyone. He knows that the man of wisdom wants nothing else; he wants only Him. Thus, the man of wisdom is most dear to Him. As it is said:

"And of the people is he who worships Allah on an edge. If he is touched by good, he is reassured by it; but if he is struck by trial, he turns on his face. He has lost [this] world and the Hereafter. That is the manifest loss." (Al-Quran 22:11-12)

(Commentary 7.18) It is said that all those who believe in God and worship Him are noble, even those who work for results (Sakama Karmi). For even if they seek results, they are believers and they perform worship. God is pleased with everyone who believes and worships.

Except for the man of wisdom, others have some expectation or desire to gain something when they worship God. That is, they worship in hope of an exchange.

On the other hand, the man of wisdom knows about the majesty of God. Because of knowledge, he is a believer in

heart and soul. He knows God is the goal. He considers Him the only refuge. Thus, he is satisfied just by being able to serve God. In that lies his satisfaction, contentment, and happiness. He does not focus elsewhere or desire anything else.

The man of wisdom is aware of the qualities and nature of God. By always being connected with God or absorbed in His thought with a single mind, he attains a nature like God's. Naturally, in the eyes of God, he holds a higher status than others.

Due to ignorance about God, not everyone can be elevated to such a high level. To attain the nature of God, one must acquire knowledge, especially spiritual knowledge.

(Commentary 7.19) After many births of practice, the wise man is able to understand that "Vasudeva is all." Vasudeva is all-pervading; Vasudeva lives in all beings—meaning, knowing that God is the root or the cause behind everything and that He is the goal, they worship God. Krishna is the son of Vasudeva, hence it is stated this way.

When the words of God flowed directly from the heart of Sri Krishna during the time of crisis, the nature of God took a manifest form within him. Krishna in human form

was hidden behind that manifest form; through him, God Himself was expressed. During the presentation of the Gita, God revealed Himself through Sri Krishna. Therefore, "Vasudeva is God" is quoted thus. As the son of Vasudeva, Sri Krishna himself is called Vasudeva here.

So far, the discussion has been about devotees who seek results and those who are selfless. Those devotees who seek results also gradually attain a selfless state through purification of the heart and reach God. But now, regarding those who worship deities driven only by cravings and desires, Sri Krishna says:

Verse 7.20 Those whose wisdom has been swept away by various desires, being compelled by their own natures, take refuge in other deities (Devas) and follow specific rules of worship.

Verse 7.21 In whatever form a devotee seeks to worship with faith, I stabilize that faith of his in that very form.

Verse 7.22 Endowed with that faith, such a devotee worships that deity and obtains his desires. In reality, however, those benefits are ordained by Me alone.

Verse 7.23 But the fruit obtained by these men of small intelligence is perishable. The worshippers of the deities go to the deities, but My devotees come to Me.

(Commentary 7.20) The time, patience, practice, and sacrifice required to realize God or Allah are not demanded in the case of deities. Instant results occur. Who is meant by "deities" has been discussed previously. Consequently, according to their own nature and mental cravings, worshippers seek refuge in the respective deities. They follow the established rules and rituals to worship those deities.

The Vedic scriptures contain provisions for worshipping various gods and goddesses to achieve different purposes. For example—there is a provision to worship the Sun god for curing diseases. For students, there is the worship of Saraswati. To obtain a beautiful wife, the worship of Uma (the wife of Shiva) is performed, and so on.

The worshippers of deities believe that for a specific purpose, one must go to the relevant god or goddess. Thus, compelled by their own nature, they worship their chosen deities. It is said:

"Unquestionably, for Allah is the pure religion. And those who take protectors besides Him say, 'We only worship them so that they may bring us nearer to Allah.' Indeed, Allah will judge between them concerning that over which they differ." (Al-Quran 39:3)

"And none of their 'partners' will be intercessors for them, and they will [then] be deniers of their partners." (Al-Quran 30:13)

"And how many angels there are in the heavens whose intercession will not avail at all except [only] after Allah has permitted [it] to whom He wills and approves." (Al-Quran 53:26)

The Gita clearly states that "those whose wisdom has been swept away by desires"—meaning those who have deviated from correct knowledge—leave God to seek refuge in deities and worship them. Therefore, the Gita explicitly clarifies that this act is not correct or wise.

This is a test. God observes what man does. Does man truly love and devote himself to Him? Does he know Him as the absolute controller and original cause of everything? Has man become enlightened with proper knowledge? Has the correct message reached them? Have they been able to hold the truth within their hearts? Or, forgetting God—the original cause—are they seeking refuge in others, driven by desire, greed, or provocation? Has steadfastness been established in their hearts? These are the tests. As it is said:

"And We had already taken a promise from Adam before, but he forgot; and We found not in him determination."

(Al-Quran 20:115)

Adam had to leave Paradise or Behesht to come to Earth. Here, the test of the heart's determination and the selection process for the wise vs. the ignorant, and the patient vs. the impatient, takes place. As it is said:

"You will surely be tested in your possessions and in yourselves... But if you are patient and fear Allah - indeed, that is of the matters [worthy] of determination." (Al-Quran 3:186)

"And do not extend your eyes toward that by which We have given enjoyment to [certain] categories of them, [its being but] the splendor of worldly life by which We test them." (Al-Quran 20:131)

However, man has no idea why God or Allah tests him in this way. He may be selecting those worthy of managing the world. As it is said:

"Say, [O Muhammad], 'I do not know; perhaps it is a trial for you or enjoyment for a time.'" (Al-Quran 10:4)

The knowledgeable understand the underlying matters. Renouncing temporary greed, they worship only God. It is said:

"O you who have believed, let not your wealth and your children divert you from the remembrance of Allah. And

whoever does that - then those are the losers." (Al-Quran 63:9)

(Commentary 7.21) The phrase "In whatever form a devotee seeks to worship with faith" means that whatever the mind desires to obtain, it wishes to worship the form of the deity associated with it. This is because he believes that the specific deity can grant it to him. Consequently, God Himself stabilizes the firm faith of that worshipper in his expected deity. This is so that he remains satisfied with his own asking and obtains his desired object or matter under a certain rule.

It is noteworthy that God Himself establishes the foundation of innate faith. No one has the capacity to do anything without the power of God. However, He allows everything to happen according to the Jiva's (living being's) wanting or will. But He has provided directions for good-bad, right-wrong, what should be done and what should not, what is proper and improper, and He continuously speaks within the heart.

God resides in everyone's heart as the Supersoul (Paramatma). He knows the mental desires of all. The devotee only expresses the wish; God's power implements it. Neither man nor deity can do anything without God's help. However, God does not interfere with anyone's will. He shows the good and bad paths in

various ways. As it is said:

"And have shown him the two ways (good and evil)? But he has not broken through the difficult pass." (Al-Quran 90:10-11)

Willing something evil is also counted as a sin for this reason. Because God leads man along the path of his will. Therefore, the responsibility and the result of the good or bad in actions performed with a sense of "I-ness" fall upon the individual. It does not fall upon God, because the will or the promise is then one's own. As it is said:

"Allah will not impose blame upon you for what is meaningless in your oaths, but He will impose blame upon you for what your hearts have earned." (Al-Quran 2:225)

(Commentary 7.22) The devotee worships his chosen deity with faith. That is, according to his nature, he worships the desired gods/goddesses and obtains the desired objects. But it is said that whatever they obtain from the deities, the provision for all of it is made by God alone. However, He gives it through the medium of the deity the devotee chooses, so that he remains satisfied with that.

In fact, the gods and goddesses cannot give anything without God's permission, nor do they have the power to give. But man of small intelligence does not know this.

Without God's help, no one has the power to do anything—neither the deities nor humans; neither to give nor to want. The truth is, there is only one worthy of worship in the universe. It is not proper to worship anyone else. As it is said:

"So exalted is Allah, the Sovereign, the Truth; there is no deity except Him, Lord of the Noble Throne." (Al-Quran 23:116)

"Had there been within the heavens and earth gods besides Allah, they both would have been ruined. So exalted is Allah, Lord of the Throne, above what they describe." (Al-Quran 21:22)

"And they worship besides Allah that which does not possess for them [the power of] provision from the heavens and the earth at all, and [it] is not able... So do not assert similarities to Allah." (Al-Quran 16:72-74)

Both the individual soul and the deity are under the will of God. A soul cannot worship deities by its own will alone, nor can deities or angels grant anything without God's will.

The gods and goddesses are merely instruments. Because people of small intelligence do not know or understand these matters, they are driven by greed and seek refuge in deities in the hope of temporary and

instant benefits. But he who knows or understands these things asks or prays only to God or Allah and worships only Him.

(Commentary 7.23) People of small intelligence worship deities. Whatever they obtain by worshipping deities is perishable and temporary. Even all the gods and goddesses, their abodes, and their worshippers are subject to destruction. As it is said:

"Everyone upon the earth will perish, and there will remain the Face of your Lord, Owner of Majesty and Honor." (Al-Quran 55:26-27)

The worshippers of the deities reach the realms of their chosen deities. For example, worshippers of the Sun go to the solar planet. Worshippers of the Moon go to the lunar planet. If someone worships a deity like Indra, he may go to that specific deity's realm. That is, the worshippers of various gods and goddesses attain different planetary systems within this material world. But the place where the true devotee of God goes is not among these. The worshipper of God or Allah attains His proximity alone. It is said:

"...But those who are with your Lord exalt Him by night and by day, and they do not tire." (Al-Quran 41:38)

The matter of attaining the proximity of God or Allah is

emphasized everywhere. It is noteworthy that God or Allah usually does not give worldly happiness, comforts, or luxuries to a true devotee. This too is a test. People of small intelligence worship deities to gain those things. But to the devotee who wants to return to the abode of God, worldly desires seem like obstacles. Those who are driven by desires and worship deities obtain the desired objects but do not find God. As it is said:

"Whoever should desire the immediate - We hasten for him from it what We will to whom We intend... And whoever desires the Hereafter and exerts for it the effort due to it while he is a believer - it is those whose effort is ever appreciated... And the Hereafter is greater in degrees and greater in preference." (Al-Quran 17:18-21)

People of small intelligence think that various gods and goddesses are each a God and they are all rivals to God. It is said:

"Say, [O Muhammad], 'If there had been with Him [other] gods, as they say, then they [each] would have sought to the Owner of the Throne a way.'" (Al-Quran 17:42)

"Had there been within the heavens and earth gods besides Allah, they both would have been ruined." (Al-Quran 21:22)

The gods and goddesses are like different limbs and

parts of the Universal Form of God. These are just some concepts. According to the concept, not only are the deities parts of God, but ordinary living beings are also parts of God. For example—the Brahmanas are the head of God, the Kshatriyas are the arms, the Vaishyas are the stomach, and the Shudras are the parts of the feet. They each perform a specific task. Sri Krishna says:

Verse 7.24 Unintelligent men, who do not know My imperishable and supreme nature, think that I, the unmanifest, have assumed a human-like persona.

Verse 7.25 I am veiled by Yoga-maya; I am not manifest to everyone. Therefore, these foolish people cannot know Me as the unborn and inexhaustible.

(Commentary 7.24) Man becomes bound due to the three qualities (Gunas) of nature. He cannot restrain himself in any way. Consequently, man cannot even conceive that there can be a state above the influence of the three qualities.

The nature of God, however, is distinct from ordinary living beings. He is beyond the three qualities, Nirguna. Therefore, He does not get bound by material bondage. He is imperishable or changeless. Even when He assumes a human-like form for His pastimes (Lila), His supreme nature remains inexhaustible.

Not all aspects of God are manifest. Ordinary man cannot conceive of His unmanifest nature. Therefore, they cannot understand Him; rather, they mistakenly think of Him as a personality with human-like traits and even mock Him. As it is said:

"And there never came to them a messenger except that they used to ridicule him." (Al-Quran 43:7)

"And already were messengers ridiculed before you, but those who mocked them were enveloped by that which they used to ridicule." (Al-Quran 6:10)

The question is, how will an ordinary man then know someone who has attained the nature of God? In fact, through some medium, God manifests one of His specific or particular qualities so that the soul can know about that quality of His. At that time, He has to assume a form. Although He is formless (Nirakara)—formless in the sense that no one has any idea about His actual form; or He does not belong to any specific form; He can assume any form at will. He can do everything. As it is said:

"Indeed, Allah is over all things competent." (Al-Quran 35:1)

"...Indeed, Allah does what He intends." (Al-Quran 22:14)

By assuming a specific form, He presents or manifests

one specific quality of His infinite opulence before everyone. It must be understood that this does not mean the form or medium becomes God. This is merely a very small portion of God's infinite wealth, not the complete God. For example, though the Himalayas are one of His manifestations, the Himalayas are not God. Though a flower or its scent is His manifestation, neither the flower nor its scent is God.

God manifests so many of His opulences before man through His creation. Through the moving and non-moving, the living and the inert, He manifests His opulences. Man has no idea about whatever of His opulence is unmanifest. Only when He becomes manifest in some way can man know about that quality, characteristic, or ability of His. For that, He has to assume a form. He becomes manifest through a form or a certain image.

When He manifests one of His states through a person, that person does not become God either. God possesses infinite opulence; no human or anything else possesses infinite opulence. They only become a medium for manifesting one or a small opulence of His.

When He sends His command, direction, or inspiration through someone during a crisis, that medium does not become God; they are merely a medium. Whom will He

choose as a medium? It is said:

"...but Allah chooses of His messengers whom He wills [to receive knowledge]." (Al-Quran 3:179)

"And your Lord creates what He wills and chooses; they have no choice." (Al-Quran 28:68)

God knows to whom His message should be sent. He knows the inner thoughts of everyone. He is also aware of the good and bad intentions of all. Certainly! He can choose anyone in this regard by His own will.

Due to a lack of correct knowledge about the imperishable and supreme nature of God, some people think of God as having human-like qualities, while others consider a person who appears to have God-like qualities to be God Himself.

(Commentary 7.25) God does not reveal Himself to everyone. He remains unmanifest. He stays behind the scenes. He keeps Himself covered or hidden from everyone through Yoga-maya or His creative skill. Yoga-maya is God's creative strategy which is not comprehensible to everyone. Therefore, ordinary people cannot know Him as the imperishable, inexhaustible, and unborn. They are unaware of God's nature. God is radiant like the sun, but Maya is like a cloud that keeps Him hidden. As it is said:

"And it is not for any human being that Allah should speak to him except by revelation or from behind a partition or by sending a messenger to reveal, by His permission, what He wills. Indeed, He is Most High and Wise." (Al-Quran 42:51)

God cannot be truly known by studying any scripture alone. He can only be known as a result of His grace. To understand Him, one must understand His supreme nature. To attain Him, one must acquire that supreme nature of His. Therefore, one must practice after gaining spiritual knowledge.

In reality, every entity possesses the qualities and nature of God because everything originates from God. That is, they are of the nature of Brahman—simple, straightforward, and blissful. But coming into contact with material nature, the individual soul becomes deluded. It even harbors malice toward God without knowing or understanding. It considers itself the doer of everything. It wants to establish dominance in the world. Bound by the three qualities of the material world, a change in its nature from the state of Brahman is initiated. The knowledge of truth becomes covered by the veil of the qualities of material nature.

When intelligence is destroyed in this way, one falls into the clutches of Maya and can no longer understand God.

One forgets that God is free from birth and death, imperishable, and inexhaustible. One also deviates from the goal and purpose of life. One even forgets what the actual duty and responsibility are. The path to bring this altered nature back to its original place is shown in the Gita, although it is difficult to attain.

It should be noted that the word "Yoga" has various meanings. Yoga means means, strategy, practice, or path. In cases like Karma-yoga, Dhyana-yoga, and Jnana-yoga, Yoga refers to the means of attaining God. Again, the word Yoga is used to explain God's creative strategy. This creative strategy is called Maya in Vedanta. Maya-yoga is the creative strategy.

For an ordinary person, Maya is like a covering. God remains covered by His own Maya. By becoming skilled through practicing Yoga and gaining the ability to be Yogarudha (steadfast in Yoga), one gains the vision of the Supersoul residing within. Those who have reached the mature state in Yoga can see or realize the true nature of God. He is not manifest to everyone. In fact, He is manifest to everyone, but ignorance does not allow one to recognize or understand Him. Therefore, people often make the mistake of recognizing the great person who has attained the status of God. Sri Krishna says:

Verse 7.26 O Arjuna! I know everything of the past,

present, and future; but no one knows Me.

Verse 7.27 O Bharata (Arjuna)! O scorcher of foes! At the time of creation, all beings fall into delusion born of the duality of desire and hate.

Verse 7.28 But those whose sins have come to an end through virtuous deeds and who are free from the delusion of duality, worship Me with determination.

(Commentary 7.26) God has created the world. Naturally, He is all-knowing. Moreover, as the Supersoul, He resides within the heart of everyone or every living being. He also completely knows the past, present, and future imaginations. But no one knows Him. As it is said:

"Vision (or insight) perceives Him not, but He perceives [all] vision; and He is the Subtle, the Acquainted." (Al-Quran 6:103)

"And conceal your speech or publicize it; indeed, He is Knowing of that within the breasts. Does He who created not know, while He is the Subtle, the Acquainted?" (Al-Quran 67:13-14)

"[He is] Knower of the unseen and the witnessed, the Grand, the Exalted." (Al-Quran 13:9)

(Commentary 7.27) Why can no one know God? It is said that during creation, upon receiving a gross or material

body, the dualistic states of attraction (Raga) and repulsion (Dvesha) arise within the Jiva. Raga is attachment to favorable things, and Dvesha is malice toward unfavorable things. These dualistic states delude the living being. This causes a change in its nature. It becomes deluded and confused.

Ego and the sense of "I-ness" arise within the Jiva. It starts thinking "This is mine" or "These are not mine," etc. It starts thinking of itself as the doer of everything. Because of being confused in this way, it forgets the qualities, opulences, and nature of God.

The Jiva also forgets that it is a servant of God. Forgetting its own duty, it wants to establish dominance here. Yet it is said:

"There is no one in the heavens and earth but that he comes to the Most Merciful as a servant." (Al-Quran 19:93)

(Commentary 7.28) So, will no one ever be able to know God or remember Him? As long as the true nature of the Jiva is covered by worldly Maya or illusion, it cannot know the ultimate truth. Until it is situated in its true nature, it cannot know God properly. Attraction-repulsion, attachment-delusion—these keep its true knowledge obscured and lead it to the path of sin.

If one can know God correctly, one can become aware of His majesty and vastness and one's own smallness. Then the heart consents to surrender itself to God. Before that, one considers oneself the doer of everything. When ignorance is removed and one becomes aware of God's majesty, one worships God.

Those who can understand God with proper knowledge follow His directed path. Following His directed path means avoiding the bad path and following the good path. In this way, those who have been able to make themselves sinless by performing virtuous deeds on the path shown by Him, and who have been able to become free from the duality of attraction-repulsion and worldly attachment and delusion, recognize God, seek His refuge, and worship Him. Virtuous deeds eliminate sinful deeds. As it is said:

"Indeed, good deeds do away with misdeeds." (Al-Quran 11:114)

When sin is exhausted, the heart becomes clear, peaceful, and pure. A pure heart is situated in correct knowledge. Because of correct knowledge, people worship God. What is that correct knowledge because of which people worship only God? It is said:

Verse 7.29 Those who strive for liberation from old age

and death by taking refuge in Me—they truly know that Brahman, the individual self (Adhyatma), and all about action (Karma).

Verse 7.30 Those who know Me as the governing principle of the material world (Adhibhuta), of the divine powers (Adhidaiva), and of all sacrifices (Adhiyajna)—they, with their minds engaged in Me, know Me even at the hour of death.

(Commentary 7.29) In the hope of gaining freedom from various problems and complexities, people seek refuge in various others. Someone seeks refuge in a doctor, someone in a palmist, someone in an engineer or a wise man or a scientist. But for salvation from old age and death, to whom will man go? Who can free man from this? The wise man knows or understands that there is no savior from this except God. This is the very correct knowledge because of which people worship only God.

Regarding those who seek refuge in God for liberation from old age and death, it is said that they know all about the principle of Brahman, the spiritual principle (Adhyatma), and the principle of action (Karma). Otherwise, why would they seek refuge only in God for this? They know that God is everything. The keys to everything are in His hands. They believe that. Therefore, they worship God. As it is said:

"And with Him are the keys of the unseen; none knows them except Him." (Al-Quran 6:59)

"Allah is the Creator of all things, and He is, over all things, Disposer of affairs. To Him belong the keys of the heavens and the earth." (Al-Quran 39:62-63)

God is the controller of everything. No one except God can grant liberation from old age and death. That superior thing which others are unable to do must be asked of the Supreme Person. Therefore, they seek refuge only in God in this matter. They remember God and, taking refuge in Him, practice to become free.

Old age, disease, and death exist in material nature. But these do not exist in the supreme nature. Therefore, to get liberation from old age and death, one must attain the supreme nature above material nature. For that, one must practice. As it is said:

"Except the chosen servants of Allah. For those there will be a known provision... And with them will be women limiting [their] glances, with large, [beautiful] eyes... They will say: 'Then are we not to die...?' Indeed, this is the great attainment." (Al-Quran 37:40-60)

(Commentary 7.30) Whatever direction one's interest lies in, or whatever matter one always remembers, or whatever state one practices creating within oneself,

that state quickly comes to one's memory of its own accord at the time of death.

It is said that those who know God as Adhibhuta, Adhidaiva, and Adhiyajna—meaning God is everything, He is the controller of all, He can do everything—and who hold and nurture that faith within, because of such attachment to God, God Himself comes to their memory at the time of death.

Marvelous Gita by A Z M Alamgir

Chapter 8: Akshara Brahma Yoga

(The Yoga of the Imperishable Brahman)

(Total Verses: 28)

Summary: The previous chapter provided a conceptual understanding of God. This chapter explains how to attain Him or enter His abode. Upon reaching God, one does not have to return to this material world; that is, there is no rebirth. One gains liberation from bondage, and all sufferings come to an end. Therefore, one should not abandon action; rather, keeping the ultimate goal of life in mind, one must perform duties without being overwhelmed by grief. Even through action, God can be realized.

Verses and Commentary

Verse 8.1 Arjuna asked: O Supreme Person! What is Brahman? What is Adhyatma (the self)? What is Karma (action)? What are Adhibhuta and Adhidaiva?

Verse 8.2 O Madhusudana! Who is Adhiyajna, and how does He reside in this body? And how can those of self-controlled mind know You at the hour of death?

(Commentary 8.1-2) At the end of the previous chapter, Sri Krishna mentioned that those who seek refuge in God for liberation from old age and death are actually aware of Brahman, the principle of Adhyatma, and the principle of Karma. They know God as Adhibhuta, Adhidaiva, and Adhiyajna. Arjuna wishes to know about these subjects in detail from Sri Krishna. Sri Krishna says:

Verse 8.3 The Supreme Imperishable is Brahman. His nature is called Adhyatma. The creative force that causes the origin, growth, and dissolution of living beings and the material world is defined as Karma.

8.3) That which has no decay is called **Akshara** (Imperishable). Akshara is indestructible and immortal—that which has no transformation or erosion; it is inexhaustible. Everything Imperishable is the Supreme Brahman (Para-Brahman). Everything in this world is perishable. Then what is it that is Imperishable,

Indestructible, Inexhaustible, Unchangeable, and eternally present? It is said:

"Everyone upon the earth will perish. And there will remain the Face of your Lord, Owner of Majesty and Honor." (Al-Quran 55:26-27)

Except for the existence of the Creator, everything in this universe will be destroyed. The Creator is God; some call Him Allah. Therefore, the Supreme Being, God, is the Para-Brahman. Everything originates from Him. The individual soul (Jivatma) is also Brahman, but it is a part of the Supreme Brahman.

The nature of Para-Brahman is **Adhyatma**. What else in this world can possess the nature of Para-Brahman? The living being, the soul, or Brahman can possess the nature of the Supreme Brahman because the soul is indestructible, immortal, inexhaustible, and conscious. The living being or individual soul is innate to the nature of Para-Brahman.

When the Jivatma comes into contact with the material world, it cannot remain in its true form or nature. Falling into the grip of the three qualities of the material world—Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas—its true nature becomes covered. Its true identity is forgotten. Thus, although it is "Akshara" (imperishable), it has some limitations. It cannot

be called "completely imperishable" in its bound state. But Para-Brahman is absolute Akshara. Nothing can change His identity or nature. He is always present in His true form.

The origin or creation of living beings or the material body is the act of creation (Srishti-karma). Their growth or worldly life is worldly duty or action (Samsara-karma). Their dissolution or renunciation is another action. Creation, preservation, and dissolution—all together—constitute **Karma**: the cycle of action or the sacrifice of action.

Verse 8.4 Perishable nature is Adhibhuta. The cosmic person is Adhidaiva. And I alone am Adhiyajna in this body.

(Commentary 8.4) In the previous verse, it was said that whatever is immortal or imperishable is Para-Brahman. Here it is said that whatever is **Kshara** (perishable), decaying, or possesses the characteristic of destruction is **Adhibhuta**.

Material nature and everything within it are subject to change and destruction. They are created at one time and destroyed at another. Therefore, material nature is "Kshara." The Imperishable (Akshara) occupies this perishable nature. Thus, the material worldly nature is

Adhibhuta, which is the dwelling place of all living beings.

On the other hand, the material body of a living being is also perishable. Changes occur here in the same way. Therefore, the material body is "Kshara." Under the control of the Imperishable, the material body holds more life within its own nature. Thus, every perishable or mortal nature that is occupied by the Imperishable is Adhibhuta. It is seen that the Imperishable holds all things with perishable characteristics or the "Bhutas" (elements/beings). Hence, the perishable is Adhibhuta.

The **Purusha** or the magnificent living entity in the form of the Universal Self is called **Adhidaiva**. That is, the Universal Form of God, which encompasses all gods, goddesses, and their realms, is Adhidaiva. He is the Hiranyagarbha Brahma, the presiding deity of the celestial realms.

He from whom everything is created, He who resides within the body as the Inner Witness (Antaryami), He who is the initiator of all sacrificial actions—He is Vishnu, He is **Adhiyajna**. Vishnu is the symbolic name of the Supersoul (Paramatma). The Supersoul is a manifestation of God and is the source of a living being's consciousness. The Supersoul residing in the body is the Adhiyajna of all embodied beings. In other words, God is Adhiyajna. The act of creation is the original Karma, but the selfless

action performed by a living being to maintain creation is called **Yajna** (sacrifice).

Thus, Sri Krishna briefly explains Brahman, Adhyatma, Karma, Adhibhuta, Adhidaiva, and Adhiyajna to Arjuna. Regarding how to attain God, He says:

Verse 8.5 And whoever, at the time of death, leaves his body remembering Me alone, at once attains My nature. Of this, there is no doubt.

Verse 8.6 O son of Kunti! Whatever state of being one remembers when he leaves his body, that state alone he attains, being ever absorbed in its thought.

Verse 8.7 Therefore, at all times, remember Me and fight. With your mind and intellect surrendered to Me, you will undoubtedly come to Me.

Verse 8.8 By practicing constant meditation, without letting the mind wander elsewhere, he who constantly meditates on the Divine Supreme Person attains Him, O Partha!

Verse 9-10 He who meditates on the Omniscient, the Beginningless, the Controller of all, subtler than the subtlest, the Support of all, whose form is inconceivable, who is refulgent like the sun and beyond all darkness—he who at the time of death, with a steady mind and

devotion, by the power of Yoga, fixes his life-breath between the eyebrows and remembers that Supreme Divine Person, attains Him.

(Commentary 8.5) Sri Krishna says that whoever leaves their body remembering God at the time of death undoubtedly attains the nature of God. That is, they attain God Himself.

(Commentary 8.6) The principle is: whatever state of being one remembers or is absorbed in at the final moment, one attains that very state or thought-reality. Whatever the mind is always immersed in usually comes to memory at the final hour. In other words, whatever the inner pull or inclination is, that manifests in one's remembrance at the end. Consequently, at the time of death, that thought easily comes to mind, and one attains that state.

(Commentary 8.7) One cannot simply remember any thought at will or for convenience at the time of death. For that, one must develop continuous practice or habit. Only then can that thought arise in the mind at the final moment. That is, the subject that makes a deep impression in the depths of a person's heart and thoughts is what comes to memory at the last moment.

Therefore, to attain God, it is desirable to remember Him

at all times. The mind must be oriented toward God. The purpose of practicing Yoga is to meditate on the Supersoul residing within. Through this, the mind remains constantly absorbed in the thought of God, leaving a deep impression within.

Sri Krishna, therefore, tells Arjuna to perform his duty while being situated in Yoga. He tells him to fight while always remembering God. If the mind, life, and intellect are immersed in God, he will attain God at the end. The war will then open the door to liberation for him!

Hence, it is not about abandoning action or the war. He is being told to remember God while performing his own duty (Swadharma). Remembrance of God must be maintained through the act of fighting. Muslims also receive this teaching of remembrance during a crisis. As it is said:

"O you who have believed, when you encounter a company [from the enemy forces], stand firm and remember Allah much that you may be successful." (Al-Quran 8:45)

(Commentary 8.8) The mind must be restrained from focusing on other things. With an undistracted mind, one must meditate on the Supreme Person, God, at all times. This habit must be built. Then, at the final hour, that

subject will remain in remembrance, and the Supreme Person will be attained. As it is said:

"O you who have believed, remember Allah with much remembrance." (Al-Quran 33:41)

(Commentary 8.9-10) One should remember someone who is Omniscient, Beginningless, the Controller, subtler than the subtlest, the Support of all, Inconceivable, Refulgent like the sun, and beyond darkness. And that is God!

He who can remember Him with a concentrated mind and devotion, by the power of Yoga, fixing the life-breath between the eyebrows, attains that Divine Supreme Person. How to remember God at the time of departure is explained here. Sri Krishna says:

Verse 8.11 I shall briefly explain to you that Supreme Goal, which the knowers of the Vedas call "The Imperishable," which the detached enter, and for which they practice celibacy.

Verse 8.12-13 Closing all the gates of the senses, confining the mind within the heart, fixing the life-breath in the head, and being established in Yogic meditation on the Self—he who departs the body while uttering the single-syllable Brahman, "Om," and remembering Me, attains the Supreme Goal.

Verse 8.14 O Partha! For the Yogi who always remembers Me without distraction and is constantly engaged in devotion, I am easily attainable.

(Commentary 8.11) That which those free from attachment strive to enter, and to attain which the seekers of Brahman practice celibacy, is called "Akshara" (the Imperishable) by the knowers of the Vedas. Akshara is inexhaustible or indestructible. No one or nothing except God is "Akshara." How it is possible to attain Him is being explained.

(Commentary 8.12-13) Restraining all sensory gates—meaning abandoning all desires—fixing the mind within the heart, confining the life-breath in the brain, and being situated in the Yoga of Samadhi on the Self, he who departs the body while uttering "Om" and remembering God attains the Supreme Goal. This path is mentioned for practitioners of Yoga.

(Commentary 8.14) The subject of discussion is attaining God or achieving His state/nature or entering His abode. This can be done in various ways. The path for Yogis was mentioned previously.

However, at the time of death, in whatever way it may be, if the mind can be concentrated on the meditation of God with devotion, that attainment is possible. He can

also be remembered through the vibration of the symbolic sound of Brahman, "Om." Om, Brahman, and God are non-different. "Om" is the impersonal sound-Brahman of God Himself.

A true devotee of God is always immersed in meditation on Him. This becomes their habit. At the time of death, God comes automatically to the memory of such people. Therefore, God is easily attainable to the constantly engaged Yogi.

The concept of Yoga at the time of death given in the previous verses is not easy for everyone. Therefore, this path of remembering God throughout life is mentioned for everyone. As it is said:

"...And remember Allah much that you may be successful." (Al-Quran 62:10)

What does it mean to find God? What happens when He is found? Sri Krishna says:

Verse 8.15 Having attained Me, these great souls do not take birth again in this transient world of misery, for they have reached the highest perfection.

Verse 8.16 From the realm of Brahma down to the lowest worlds, all are subject to return, O Arjuna! But attaining Me, O son of Kunti, there is no rebirth.

(Commentary 8.15) The material world is perishable and riddled with various miseries. But those who attain the supreme abode of God do not take birth again in this transient world of suffering. This is a matter of faith. Why do they not take birth again?

It is said that the supreme abode of God is the ultimate destination of all sacrificial actions or the final goal of life. Attaining that is the ultimate success of life. Everyone is running toward that goal. Once the final goal or the highest stage is achieved, the reason for returning to worldly duties is exhausted. Therefore, one does not have to return to this world. As it is said:

"Indeed, those who have said, 'Our Lord is Allah,' and then remained on a right course - there will be no fear concerning them, nor will they grieve. Those are the companions of Paradise, abiding eternally therein as reward for what they used to do." (Al-Quran 46:13-14)

"They will not taste death therein... That is the great attainment." (Al-Quran 44:56-57)

(Commentary 8.16) The scriptures mention seven realms (Lokas). These are Bhu, Bhuvah, Svah, Mahah, Janah, Tapah, and Satya-loka or Brahma-loka. Brahma-loka is the highest realm. As it is said:

"And He completed them as seven heavens in two days

and inspired in each heaven its command." (Al-Quran 41:12)

"...Then He directed Himself to the heaven and made them seven heavens." (Al-Quran 2:29)

In the material universe, from the earthly world to Brahma-loka, everything is bound by the cycle of birth and death. Even Brahma himself is not free from the cycle of birth, death, old age, and disease. According to the laws of material nature, Brahma and all inhabitants of Brahma-loka must die. As it is said:

"He it is who created you... and [then] decreed a term and a specified time [known] to Him." (Al-Quran 6:2)

Mortals perform good deeds or sacrifices to accumulate merit (Punya). By accumulating merit, they gradually go to various heavens or higher realms. Progressing in higher realms, they move to even higher ones like Chandra-loka (the Moon), Indra-loka, Brahma-loka, etc. But when the merit earned through sacrifice is exhausted, they fall back to earth through rain. Then they turn into grains. A living being eats those grains, and they turn into semen. That semen is transferred to a woman's womb. The woman becomes pregnant. In this way, the Jivatma receives a body again. Even if one reaches the highest Brahma-loka, if merit is exhausted, one must

return to this earth. As it is said:

"And who sends down rain from the sky in measured amounts, and We revive thereby a dead land. Thus will you be brought forth." (Al-Quran 43:11)

A living entity receives good or bad results through its actions. The Jivatma, taking the mind, senses, and the subtle body, along with divine or demonic wealth according to the impressions of many births, attains a new womb and assumes a corresponding body. From Brahma down to the insects, all realms are subject to return.

The living being again performs rituals and sacrifices. It accumulates merit. Until it is completely liberated—that is, until it reaches the abode of God—it constantly comes and goes in the material world. This is what is referred to here as "return." As it was said:

"Go down from it, all of you. And when guidance comes to you from Me, whoever follows My guidance - there will be no fear concerning them, nor will they grieve." (Al-Quran 2:38)

"And as for those who were [destined to be] prosperous, they will be in Paradise, abiding therein as long as the heavens and the earth endure, except what your Lord should will." (Al-Quran 11:108)

"He will cause you to die, then He will begin [your] life, then to Him you will be returned." (Al-Quran 2:28)

After the Great Dissolution (Mahapralaya), the living being enters the eternal spiritual abode. As it is said:

"The Striking Calamity - What is the Striking Calamity? ... It is the Day when people will be like moths, dispersed, and the mountains will be like wool, fluffed up. Then as for one whose scales are heavy [with good deeds], he will be in a pleasant life. But as for one whose scales are light, his abode will be Hawiyah. And what can make you know what is that? It is a Fire, intensely hot." (Al-Quran 101:1-11)

"O mankind, indeed you are laboring toward your Lord with [great] exertion and will meet it... Then he will meet his Lord with his deeds." (Al-Quran 84:6)

Devoted followers of God strive to return directly to Him. The supreme abode of God is unmanifest (Avyakta). That is, that planetary system is beyond our vision, beyond our conception, and even beyond description. It is **Akshara** (Imperishable). It has no decay; it is indestructible and immortal. Even after all other heavenly planets are destroyed, it remains. Reaching it, there is no rebirth. Once one enters the divine abode of God, one does not have to return to this material world. As it is said:

"Except the chosen servants of Allah... They will say: 'Then

are we not to die...?' Indeed, this is the great attainment." (Al-Quran 37:60-61)

"And this worldly life is not but diversion and amusement. And indeed, the home of the Hereafter - that is the [eternal] life, if only they knew." (Al-Quran 29:64)

"...And therein is whatever the souls desire and [what] delights the eyes, and you will abide therein eternally." (Al-Quran 43:71)

Even after performing proper actions, if the mind is not completely peaceful, then even if the status of a deity or Brahma is achieved, there is no escape from rebirth. Only when all the desires residing in the heart are destroyed at the root does the mortal being become immortal. Then, even while residing in a human body, one experiences the feeling of attaining the Supersoul in this world. Finding God means attaining a life free from suffering, full of happiness and bliss. God is the embodiment of bliss!

Verse 8.17 Those who know that a day of Brahma lasts for a thousand Yugas and that his night also ends after a thousand Yugas, are the true knowers of day and night.

Verse 8.18 At the coming of day, all manifested beings emerge from the unmanifest; at the arrival of night, they merge back into that same unmanifest.

Verse 8.19 O Partha! This same multitude of living beings, taking birth again and again, is dissolved at the arrival of night and is involuntarily reborn at the coming of day.

(Commentary 8.17) In human terms, one thousand Chaturyugas constitute a single day for Brahma (here, "Yuga" refers to the cycle of four ages). Similarly, another thousand Chaturyugas make up one night. Seers of the truth understand this calculation of cosmic time. As it is said:

"And indeed, a day with your Lord is like a thousand years of those which you count." (Al-Quran 22:47)

There are various units for measuring time, much like how light-years are used for vast distances. Here, time is measured through a **Kalpa**. One day of Brahma is called a Kalpa. Within one Kalpa, the four Yugas—Satya, Treta, Dvapara, and Kali—rotate a thousand times.

- **Satya Yuga** lasts 1,728,000 years.
- **Treta Yuga** lasts 1,296,000 years.
- **Dvapara Yuga** lasts 864,000 years.
- **Kali Yuga** lasts 432,000 years.

From this calculation alone, one can estimate how minute the duration of the material universe is in the context of

cosmic time. When these four Yugas rotate a thousand times, it equals one day for Brahma, and his night is of equal length. According to this timeframe, Brahma lives for one hundred such years before giving up his body. While this lifespan seems eternal to us, in the perspective of true eternity, it is as fleeting as a flash of lightning. As it is said:

"The Day they see what they are promised [the Resurrection], it will be as if they had not remained [in the world] except for an hour of a day." (Al-Quran 46:35)

Those who understand cosmic time in this way are the true knowers of reality. It is noteworthy that the characteristics of **Satya Yuga** are virtue, wisdom, and adherence to Dharma (laws). Ignorance and sin are almost non-existent. In **Treta Yuga**, sin begins. In **Dvapara Yuga**, Dharma declines and Adharma (unrighteousness) rises. Finally, in **Kali Yuga** (the current age), conflict, ignorance, and sin prevail, and Dharma almost disappears. At the end of Kali Yuga, the Supreme Lord manifests as the Kalki Avatar to destroy the wicked, protect His devotees, and usher in a new Satya Yuga. This cycle continues.

(Commentary 8.18-19) During Brahma's day, everything emerges from the unmanifest into the manifest state. Everything becomes active. At nightfall, everything

dissolves back into the unmanifest. With the dawn of a new day, everything is expressed again.

The beginning of Brahma's day is the dawn of creation (Kalparambha), and the end of the day is the dissolution (Pralaya). During the dissolution, living beings remain dormant in a causal or "seed" state and are reborn at the start of the next Kalpa. As it is said:

"Allah originates creation, then repeats it." (Al-Quran 10:34)

In Samkhya philosophy, the primal nature is called the Unmanifest (Avyakta). It is also called Hiranyagarbha or the "sleep of Brahma." The first transformation of this nature is Mahat-tattva (the Great Principle).

Like bubbles in an ocean, countless Brahmas are constantly rising and dissolving in the Causal Ocean. Brahma and his creation are parts of the material universe, eternally flowing. Even Brahma is not free from birth, death, old age, and disease in the material realm; yet, he remains engaged in the service of God by managing the material world.

During Brahma's day, living beings perform their actions in the higher and lower planets. But at night, they dissolve again. As it is said:

"And He it is who takes your souls by night and knows what you have committed by day. Then He revives you therein that a specified term may be fulfilled. Then to Him is your return, then He will inform you about what you used to do." (Al-Quran 6:60)

When Brahma's lifespan finally ends, everything vanishes and remains unmanifest for billions of years. When a new Brahma is born in another Kalpa, they manifest again. It is said:

"The Day when We will fold the heaven like the folding of a [written] sheet for the records. As We began the first creation, We will repeat it. [That is] a promise binding upon Us. Indeed, We will do it." (Al-Quran 21:104)

Those who try to stay within the material world accumulate merit to rise to higher planets, but once that merit is exhausted, they fall back. Until they are liberated, these beings must repeatedly take birth, face death, and suffer the miseries of the world.

If everyone in the universe is bound by the cycle of birth and death, what is the way to salvation (Moksha)? Sri Krishna says:

Verse 8.20 But beyond this unmanifested nature, there is another eternal unmanifested nature which does not perish even when all beings are destroyed.

Verse 8.21 That which is called the unmanifest and imperishable is the supreme destination; having attained it, one never returns. That is My supreme abode.

Verse 8.22 O Partha! That Supreme Person, in whom all beings reside and by whom all this is pervaded, is attainable only by unswerving devotion.

(Commentary 8.20) It is said that there is another eternal or Sanatana nature, which is the Supreme Soul or the Supreme Lord. This nature is superior to the previously mentioned unmanifest (material) nature. Even when everything else is dissolved, it remains. As it is said:

"Everyone upon the earth will perish. And there will remain the Face of your Lord, Owner of Majesty and Honor." (Al-Quran 55:26-27)

"Everything will be destroyed except His Face [Self]." (Al-Quran 28:88)

(Commentary 8.21) Even when Brahma and all other heavenly planets are destroyed, that eternal unmanifest nature exists. This nature of God is called **Akshara** (Imperishable). All things reside within Him. This is the supreme goal. Once attained, there is no return to the material world. This is the supreme abode of God. As it is said:

"Those will be awarded the Chamber for what they patiently endured, and they will be received therein with greetings and [words of] peace. Abiding eternally therein. Good is the settlement and residence." (Al-Quran 25:75-76)

How can that goal be achieved?

(Commentary 8.22) God pervades everything in the universe. Everything is situated within Him. He sustains everything through His superior (Para) and inferior (Apara) energies. As it is said:

"...And ever is Allah, of all things, encompassing." (Al-Quran 4:126)

Sri Krishna states that the Supreme Person is attainable **only through unswerving devotion (Ananya Bhakti)**. There is no other way. Thus, it is said:

"...And the remembrance of Allah is greater." (Al-Quran 29:45)

Devotees who are constantly engaged in His service and meditation enter the supreme abode of God (the Vaikuntha planets). There is no rebirth after entering there. That is the ultimate goal of life. Once reached, the cause for rebirth ceases, and one gains liberation from the bond of birth and death, attaining an eternally blissful

life in Brahman.

Note that while Samkhya speaks of Kaivalya (isolation) and Buddhism speaks of Nirvana (extinction of suffering), they do not explicitly describe the "blissful life" found in the attainment of God. In God's supreme abode, He exists as "One," yet He manifests in countless forms. He is all-pervading, ensuring everything functions perfectly.

Though God is situated far away, His energies are so far-reaching that they manage the entire universe flawlessly. As it is said:

"By those [angels] lined up in rows... and [the angels say], 'There is not among us any except that he has a known position. And indeed, we are those who line up [for prayer]. And indeed, we are those who exalt [Allah].'" (Al-Quran 37:1, 164-166)

This supreme abode is also called **Chintamani** Dhama, where all desires are fulfilled. The trees provide any food desired, and the cows are Surabhi cows, providing unlimited milk. As it is said:

"They will have therein whatever they wish, abiding eternally." (Al-Quran 25:16)

In that eternal abode, hundreds of thousands of Lakshmis (goddesses of fortune) constantly serve the Lord. There

is nothing superior to the spiritual abode of God. As it is said:

"In them are women limiting [their] glances, whom neither man nor jinn has touched before them." (Al-Quran 55:56)

"No fatigue shall touch them therein, nor shall they [ever] be expelled from it." (Al-Quran 15:48)

Everything there is filled with spiritual bliss. Nothing is material. All varieties are an expansion of God's own self. As it is said:

"The description of Paradise... is that in it are rivers of water unaltered, rivers of milk the taste of which never changes, rivers of wine delicious to those who drink, and rivers of purified honey, in which they will have from all [kinds of] fruits and forgiveness from their Lord." (Al-Quran 47:15)

Verse 8.23 O best of the Bharatas! I shall now explain to you the times at which departing Yogis achieve non-return and return.

Verse 8.24 Fire, light, day, the bright fortnight, and the six months of the northern solstice—departing at these times, those who know Brahman go to Brahman.

Verse 8.25 Smoke, night, the dark fortnight, and the six months of the southern solstice—departing at these

times, the Yogi attains the lunar light and returns.

Verse 8.26 According to the Vedas, there are two paths in this world—the light and the dark. By one, a man goes to non-return; by the other, he returns again.

(Commentary 8.23-26) Sri Krishna is describing the paths through which the soul departs. Just as scientists today calculate the exact day and time for a spacecraft's launch to reach a specific destination, there are specific paths and times for the soul's journey. As it is said:

"By the heaven full of paths! Indeed, you are in differing speech. He is deluded away from it who is deluded." (Al-Quran 51:7-9)

A perfected Yogi can determine the suitable path and time to leave the material world. However, for those who are not perfected, success depends on divine grace and chance.

- **The Path of Light (Shukla Gati):** Associated with fire, light, day, the waxing moon, and the northern solstice (Uttarayan). Souls departing during these times, guided by the presiding deities of these elements, go to Brahman and do not return.
- **The Path of Darkness (Krishna Gati):** Associated with smoke, night, the waning moon, and the southern

solstice (Dakshinayan). Souls departing during these times go to the lunar sphere (Chandraloka), enjoy the fruits of their ritualistic actions, and eventually return to the mortal world.

In Vedic terms, the six months of the northern solstice are the "day" of the gods, and the southern solstice is their "night."

Verse 8.27 O Partha! Knowing these two paths, the Yogi is never deluded. Therefore, O Arjuna, be always established in Yoga.

Verse 8.28 The Yogi who knows this truth surpasses all the meritorious fruits prescribed for the study of the Vedas, the performance of sacrifices, the practice of austerities, and the giving of charity, and attains the Supreme Primeval Abode.

(Commentary 8.27) A Yogi who understands these two paths—one leading to liberation and the other to rebirth—is not confused. He does not worry about the "timing" of his death because he is directly connected to God. He trusts in God's judgment and performs his duties with firm faith. As it is said:

"...And Allah loves those who rely [upon Him]." (Al-Quran 3:159)

While the two paths described might seem difficult to navigate, being established in **Yoga** (devotion) makes attaining God easy, safe, and certain. Sri Krishna urges Arjuna to stay connected to Yoga while performing his work. Those who rely on their own efforts (through mere knowledge or ritual) must worry about the "right time" to die; the devotee, however, is taken care of by God Himself.

(Commentary 8.28) According to Vedic tradition, one typically progresses through stages—student life, householder, forest dweller, and finally renunciation—performing sacrifices and austerities to reach perfection.

However, the beauty and importance of **Bhakti** (devotion) or the constant remembrance of God is such that this single practice allows one to surpass the merits of all Vedic rituals and charities. As it is said:

"...Indeed, prayer prohibits immorality and wrongdoing, and the remembrance of Allah is greater." (Al-Quran 29:45)

The ultimate purpose of Yoga, prayer, worship, and rituals is to remember God. A Yogi is always in Samadhi (absorption) in the Supreme. Thus, they naturally transcend the temporary rewards (like heaven) that ritualistic actions provide and reach the Supreme Person.

While ritualistic sacrifices have their place for the general public, the Yogi views even the attainment of heaven as insignificant compared to the realization of the Supreme Divine Person.

Marvelous Gita by A Z M Alamgir

Chapter 9: Raja-Vidya-Guhya Yoga

(The Yoga of the Sovereign Science and Sovereign Secret)

(Total Verses: 34)

Summary: Attaining God leads to liberation from material bondage. However, those devoid of faith and devotion fail to reach Him. They continue to revolve in the cycle of birth and death, remaining bound by material nature and experiencing the consequences of their good and bad deeds. When one gains proper knowledge about God and understands His greatness, they become devoted and worship Him. This chapter highlights the majesty of God and explains how He can be attained.

Verses and Commentary

Verse 9.1 The Supreme Lord said: Because you are not envious, I shall impart to you this most secret scientific knowledge combined with realization, by knowing which you shall be released from the miseries of material existence.

Verse 9.2 This knowledge is the king of education, the most secret of all secrets. It is the purest knowledge, and because it gives direct perception of the self by realization, it is the perfection of religion. It is everlasting, and it is joyfully performed.

(Commentary 9.1) Sri Krishna is speaking to Arjuna about the most confidential or "hidden" knowledge regarding God. This knowledge is described as "scientific" because it is accurate and systematic. The goal for which this knowledge is applied will certainly be achieved; the process is proven.

Krishna mentions, "Because you are not envious (non-fault-finding)," I am telling you this. This suggests that people who do not focus on the essence, do not learn, and instead spend their time finding faults in others—or even in God—cannot have the truth revealed to them. Such a nature is not pleasing to God. Because Arjuna is free from such traits, Krishna shares this secret with him. He adds that by gaining this knowledge, one will be

liberated from "evil" or "inauspiciousness." In this world, humans are bound by the "evil" of suffering and distress. Applying this knowledge makes life free from agony and brings deep peace, which is the ultimate goal of all human endeavors.

(Commentary 9.2) This is called "most secret" because not everyone is aware of it, nor does everyone realize its greatness. Yet, it is the "King of Education" (Sovereign Science). What is attained through it is supreme; nothing is higher. It is "pure" because it is flawless. Its practical results can be directly perceived in life.

Commonly, people understand "religion" as following specific rules, rituals, or grammar-like codes of conduct. While this is necessary for managing large populations, Krishna says that working through this "hidden knowledge" achieves the same goal more effectively. Even if it seems like formal religious codes aren't being followed on the surface, this path is actually more aligned with true religion.

Since humans are always in search of happiness, this path is described as "joyfully performed." The results are not only pleasant but also "imperishable" and "everlasting"—they never diminish. One does not need to enter the complexities of many intricate rules. This is why it is called **Raja-Vidya** (The King of Knowledge). What is that

knowledge? Sri Krishna says:

Verse 9.3 O scorcher of enemies! Those who are faithless in this path of religion cannot attain Me. Therefore, they return to the path of birth and death in this material world.

(Commentary 9.3) Religion (Dharma) is the correct way or the proper path to lead one's life. God has shown the right path for humans, as cited in various scriptures. Simultaneously, God keeps humans bound in the material world through the qualities of nature and various attractions. Humans must become free from this bondage and return to Him. This is the "test." As it is said:

"And know that your properties and your children are but a trial and that Allah has with Him a great reward." (Al-Quran 8:28)

The question is: does a person want the world or God? Do they want immediate, fleeting worldly pleasure, or the eternal, supreme happiness achieved through patient spiritual practice? God observes who truly loves Him with a firm heart and wishes to follow His path. It is said:

"No! But you love the immediate (world) and leave the Hereafter (75:20-21). So turn away from him who turns away from Our remembrance and desires not except the worldly life (53:29). That is because they preferred the

worldly life over the Hereafter... Allah does not guide the disbelieving people. Those are the ones over whose hearts and hearing and eyes Allah has set a seal, and it is those who are the heedless. Assuredly, in the Hereafter they will be the losers." (Al-Quran 16:107-109)

The path of religion explains how to be free from material bondage. But those who do not follow that path with faith and devotion fail to find God. They return repeatedly to the cycle of birth and death. As it is said:

"And We had already taken a promise from Adam before, but he forgot; and We found not in him determination." (Al-Quran 20:115)

The first man, Adam, was not without faith, but he lacked the firmness of heart at that moment. Therefore, they had to descend from the heavenly life of happiness. As it is said:

"We said, 'Go down from it, all of you. And when guidance comes to you from Me, whoever follows My guidance—there will be no fear concerning them, nor will they grieve.'" (Al-Quran 2:38)

"We have certainly created man in the best of stature; then We return him to the lowest of the low, except for those who believe and do righteous deeds, for they will have a reward uninterrupted." (Al-Quran 95:4-6)

Why are these examples used to analyze the Gita? Because the outcome for those who disobey God's instructions or lack faith is the same: they fall from a higher state to a lower one. The Gita says: "Those who are faithless in this path of religion cannot attain Me and return to the path of death." The core message of all scriptures is identical, though there may be differences in time, place, and circumstance.

The path of liberation shown in the Gita is very scientific. To break material bonds and ascend to a higher realm, the mind needs a certain "velocity" or momentum. Those who are not firm in heart cannot generate this internal power. Thus, the "gravity" of worldly attraction pulls them back. Just as a spacecraft needs a specific escape velocity to break the earth's gravitational pull, the soul needs spiritual strength to reach God's abode.

The Gita shows how to generate that willpower. Only those who follow this path and focus their internal energy on God can break the worldly bond and return to His abode. Everyone receives results according to their desires.

Verse 9.4 By Me, in My unmanifested form, this entire universe is pervaded. All beings are in Me, but I am not in them.

Verse 9.5 And yet everything that is created does not rest in Me. Behold My inconceivable mystic power! Although I am the maintainer of all living entities and although I am everywhere, I am not a part of this cosmic manifestation, for My Self is the very source of creation.

Verse 9.6 Understand that as the mighty wind, blowing everywhere, rests always in the sky, all created beings rest in Me.

(Commentary 9.4) God pervades the entire universe in His "unmanifested" form. One must understand that while He is unmanifest to living beings, He is not unmanifest to Himself. Living beings exist within His internal energy. It is impossible for a creature to have a complete concept of His full form, just as a tiny microbe within a human body cannot perceive the full form of the human.

Everything moves within His material nature, but one should not mistakenly think that He is physically "stuck" there; hence He says, "I am not in them." Just as a person pervades their own body with consciousness, but the "person" is not merely the body. Everything is within Him; His various energies hold everything together. As it is said:

"To Allah belongs whatever is in the heavens and

whatever is on the earth. And ever is Allah, of all things, encompassing." (Al-Quran 4:126)

(Commentary 9.5) God's various powers and techniques are His opulence. What He can do is inconceivable! The word "Yoga" is used here to mean "mystic power" or "creative technique."

He sustains everyone by His inconceivable power. Everything is His creation, yet He is not "inside" the creation in a way that limits Him. He is separate and independent from everything. His connection is like "contactless connection." As it is said:

"Indeed, Allah is free from need of the worlds." (Al-Quran 3:97)

The energies we study in science—sound, heat, light, electricity—are all opulences of God. Science "discovers" or finds these, and through them, we come to know God bit by bit.

(Commentary 9.6) Just as the wind moves everywhere in the sky but does not "touch" or affect the sky itself, all living beings move within God's internal nature. This is how the relationship should be understood.

Verse 9.7 O son of Kunti! At the end of the Kalpa, all beings merge into My nature, and at the beginning of

another Kalpa, by My power, I create them again.

Verse 9.8 The whole cosmic order is under Me. Under My will it is automatically manifested again and again, and under My will it is annihilated at the end.

(Commentary 9.7-8) A "Kalpa" is one day of Brahma. Brahma is the first created being in the universe. In one Kalpa, the four Yugas (Satya, Treta, Dvapara, and Kali) rotate a thousand times. Brahma's day is equal to 4,320,000,000 human years. As it is said:

"And indeed, a day with your Lord is like a thousand years of those which you count." (Al-Quran 22:47)

After 100 such years, Brahma dies, marking the end of the Kalpa and the great dissolution (Pralaya). At that time, God's manifested energy merges back into Him. It is said:

"He arranges [each] matter from the heaven to the earth; then it will ascend to Him in a Day, the extent of which is a thousand years of those which you count." (Al-Quran 32:5)

"He has decreed a term and a specified term [known] to Him." (Al-Quran 6:2)

The creation, maintenance, and destruction of the material world depend entirely on God's will. When He wishes, creation begins again.

"The Day when We will fold the heaven like the folding of a [written] sheet... As We began the first creation, We will repeat it." (Al-Quran 21:104)

God is the cause of all causes. He impregnates material nature with living beings. These beings receive different bodies and conditions based on their actions (Karma) in previous lives—whether they developed divine or demonic tendencies.

"Indeed, He begins creation; then He repeats it that He may reward those who have believed and done righteous deeds in justice." (Al-Quran 10:4)

"Then He will return you into it and extract you [again] as a new creation." (Al-Quran 71:18)

"Allah is the one who created you, then provided for you, then will cause you to die, then will give you life." (Al-Quran 30:40)

Everything happens by the "Will Power" of the Supreme Lord, which is an inconceivable strength.

"Allah creates what He wills. Indeed, Allah is over all things competent." (Al-Quran 24:45)

Divine power is threefold: the power of action (Kriya-shakti), the power of knowledge (Jnana-shakti), and the power of will (Iccha-shakti). While nature is the "material

cause" of creation, God's Will is the "primary cause." The material world is created to fulfill the desires of the living beings.

"In the bounty of Allah and in His mercy—in that let them rejoice." (Al-Quran 10:58)

"The life of this world!! A provision from Us for a [short] time." (Al-Quran 36:44)

Verse 9.9 O Dhananjaya! All this work cannot bind Me. I am ever detached from all these material activities, seated as though neutral.

(Commentary 9.9) Nature has three qualities (Gunas): Sattva (Goodness), Rajas (Passion), and Tamas (Ignorance). These bind the living beings to the material world. However, these qualities do not affect God. He remains neutral and detached, existing above the influence of these modes. Thus, He is never bound.

Living beings, however, often cannot escape this "Maya" (illusion). They get deeply entangled in worldly activities and forget who they are, where they came from, and where they are going. This forgetfulness is the cause of their imprisonment. The Gita teaches how to attain God's transcendental nature and rise above this bondage.

Verse 9.10 This material nature, which is one of My

energies, is working under My direction, O son of Kunti, producing all moving and non-moving beings. Under its rule this manifestation is created and annihilated again and again.

(Commentary 9.10) The Supreme Lord directs the universe. He is eternally active. Without His direction, material nature can do nothing. As it is said:

"He arranges [each] matter from the heaven to the earth... Every day He is bringing about a matter. He knows what penetrates into the earth and what emerges from it and what descends from the heaven and what ascends therein." (Al-Quran 32:5, 55:29, 34:2)

Because of His systematic direction, the world changes and expands in an orderly fashion. At the appointed time, it is destroyed, and a new creation arises.

"As We began the first creation, We will repeat it." (Al-Quran 21:104)

God is the Supreme Controller. Material nature produces moving and non-moving things only because of His glance and command.

"Our word to a thing when We intend it is only that We say to it, 'Be,' and it is." (Al-Quran 16:40)

Verse 9.11 Fools deride Me when I descend in the human

form. They do not know My transcendental nature as the Supreme Lord of all that be.

Verse 9.12 Those who are thus bewildered are attracted by demonic and atheistic views. In that deluded condition, their hopes for liberation, their fruitive activities, and their culture of knowledge are all defeated.

(Commentary 9.11) Whether we call Him Bhagavan or Allah, He must be recognized by His qualities, nature, and essence. Ignorant and foolish individuals do not understand the supreme nature or attributes of the Lord of all creation. Therefore, when they see someone manifesting such a nature within a human body, they neglect or ridicule them. As it is said:

"But there never came a messenger to them but they used to mock him." (Al-Quran 15:11)

"And when they see you, [O Muhammad], they take you not except in ridicule, [saying], 'Is this the one whom Allah has sent as a messenger?'" (Al-Quran 25:41)

"And be patient over what they say and avoid them with gracious avoidance." (Al-Quran 73:10)

When we see a person, we see their physical body. We recognize and know that person through the body. In reality, the body is like a code that helps identify someone

individually. As it is said:

"O mankind, indeed We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another." (Al-Quran 49:13)

A human's true essence is not this body. Whether an asura (demon) or a deva (god), an animal or the Divine resides within—it is impossible to understand this just by looking at the external form of the body. To recognize, know, and understand God, one must observe His nature, essence, qualities, and characteristics. Seeing the greedless, unattached, neutral, simple, and blissful nature of God, fools ridicule Him. They think He is foolish and consider Him unfit for navigating the world. In reality, they are unfamiliar with the nature or essence of God; consequently, they fail to understand and become bewildered.

(Commentary 9.12) Ignorant and foolish people do not seek or pray to God; instead, they turn to various demigods. They believe that demigods will quickly fulfill all their desires. Because they are turned away from the Supreme Lord, their sacrifices or actions become fruitless. Devoid of devotion to the Supreme, their knowledge is of no use. Their scholarly command of scriptures also becomes futile. Failing to comprehend the goal of life, they become scattered in mind and deluded.

It is said:

"And leave those who take their religion as amusement and diversion and whom the worldly life has deluded... Those are the ones who are given up to destruction for what they have earned." (Al-Quran 6:70)

In this way, people of a 'Rakshasic' (dark/ignorant) or 'Asuric' (passionate/demonic) nature, deluded by false and confused knowledge, neglect God.

Verse 9.13 O son of Pritha, those who are not deluded, the great souls, are under the protection of the divine nature. They are fully engaged in devotional service because they know Me as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, original and inexhaustible.

Verse 9.14 Always chanting My glories, endeavoring with great determination, bowing down before Me, these great souls perpetually worship Me with devotion.

(Commentary 9.13-14) On the other hand, those who are great souls (Mahatmas) take shelter of the divine or 'Sattvic' (pure) nature. They believe in God. They believe that He is the original and primary cause of creation. They believe He is inexhaustible and imperishable—that He has no death. With a one-pointed mind, they worship only Him. As it is said:

"He is the Ever-Living; there is no deity except Him, so invoke Him, [being] sincere to Him in religion." (Al-Quran 40:65)

"And rely upon the Ever-Living who does not die." (Al-Quran 25:58)

Knowing God to be imperishable and ever-living, great souls worship Him with one-pointed devotion. They chant His glories and preach His greatness. They do not glorify any demigod, ordinary human, or god-like personality. They rely only on God or Allah and bow their heads only to Him. As it is said:

"Exalt the name of your Lord, the Most High." (Al-Quran 87:1)

"To Him belongs whoever is in the heavens and the earth. And those near Him... they exalt Him night and day; they do not flag." (Al-Quran 21:19-20)

Believing in God with a one-pointed mind and being drenched in devotion and love for Him is the path of Yoga. Such people always remember God or Allah within their hearts, even amidst all types of work. They worship Him and offer obeisances (Namaskar or Sajda) to Him. As it is said:

"Prostrate and draw near [to Allah]." (Al-Quran 96:19)

"And remember the name of your Lord and devote yourself to Him with [complete] devotion." (Al-Quran 73:8)

Verse 9.15 Others, who engage in sacrifice by the cultivation of knowledge, worship the Supreme Lord as the one without a second, as diverse in many, and in the universal form.

(Commentary 9.15) Even though believers are worshippers of God, truthfully, no one knows God with absolute certainty. There are various philosophies or perspectives on this matter. Therefore, different people know or understand Him in different ways and worship Him according to their own knowledge.

Some know God as the "One" and non-different cause of all causes. Knowing God as omnipotent and supreme, they worship only "The One." At the end of their intellectual analysis, they see the beginning and end of everything in one place. Thus, they do not worship anyone or anything else. As it is said:

"So exalted is Allah, the Sovereign, the Truth; there is no deity except Him, Lord of the Noble Throne." (Al-Quran 23:116)

"Indeed, your God is One." (Al-Quran 37:4)

On the other hand, some conceive of various forms of God based on specialized activities. They worship each specialized form separately as the absolute authority over specific tasks. In essence, they worship deities specialized based on qualities and actions.

Others worship the universal form (Vishwarupa) of God. They believe that this entire universe is a form of God. In this way, due to differences in knowledge, He is worshipped in various ways. It is said:

Verse 9.16 But it is I who am the ritual, I the sacrifice, the offering to the ancestors, the healing herb, the transcendental chant. I am the butter and the fire and the offering.

Verse 9.17 I am the father of this universe, the mother, the support and the grandsire. I am the object of knowledge, the purifier and the syllable om. I am also the Rig, the Sama and the Yajur Vedas.

Verse 9.18 I am the goal, the sustainer, the master, the witness, the abode, the refuge and the most dear friend. I am the creation and the annihilation, the basis of everything, the resting place and the eternal seed.

Verse 9.19 O Arjuna, I give heat, and I withhold and send forth the rain. I am immortality, and I am also death personified. Both spirit and matter are in Me.

(Commentary 9.16-19) The power, forms, and opulences of God are infinite. Different individuals worship different forms or powers. Here, some concepts of the various forms of God are presented. As an example, everything cited above has no existence separate from God. He is the cause of the world's creation. He is the original source of all qualities derived from power. Everything is born from Him. All the qualified living beings or material objects we see separately are, in one word, God. Altogether, He is complete, one, and non-different. Those endowed with knowledge, therefore, see God in everything. God manifests Himself in various necessary forms for the welfare of living beings. But why He does all this—no one knows the ultimate purpose. Humans only know some apparent goals. As it is said:

"It may be that [the worldly life] is a trial for you and enjoyment for a time." (Al-Quran 21:111)

All the things cited above are different manifestations of the power of God or Allah. All activities of the world are performed through the various powers of God. In fact, God does everything. He is the cause of creation and the refuge during annihilation. As it is said:

I am the ritual/nature: "Our Lord is He who gave each thing its form and then guided [it]." (Al-Quran 20:50)

I am the goal: "And to Allah is the outcome of [all] matters." (Al-Quran 31:22) "And that to your Lord is the finality." (Al-Quran 53:42)

Sustainer, Master: "Your Lord is the most Generous." (Al-Quran 96:3)

Witness: "And sufficient is Allah as Witness." (Al-Quran 4:79)

Abode/Refuge: "So seek refuge in Allah." (Al-Quran 40:56) "Say, 'I seek refuge in the Lord of mankind.'" (Al-Quran 114:1)

Protector: "And sufficient is Allah as Disposer of affairs." (Al-Quran 4:132)

Friend: "And you have not besides Allah any protector or any helper." (Al-Quran 4:132)

In essence, all scriptures present such concepts about God, Allah, or the Creator to mankind. The core messages are the same everywhere. There will certainly be some differences due to variations in place, time, and circumstance.

It is said that God is the father, mother, and ordainer of this world. As a father, God holds the superior or living nature as a seed. As a mother, He holds the inferior or material nature. The father provides the seed of life into

material nature. The mother is the carrier of the womb, the sustainer of the embryo. Material nature itself is the creator. During annihilation, living beings return to the Ordainer in a seed-like state and remain preserved. For the sake of understanding, this is just a concept.

Here, something needs to be said regarding the use of the word "I." In times of crisis, when the instruction of God or Allah descends upon someone who has received blessings, there is often no time, opportunity, or need for them to repeatedly say, "God has said" or "Allah has said."

The message of God essentially flows directly through such a person. At that time, using the word "I," the Sender's instruction automatically emerges from within them with great speed. That must be accepted as the word of God. Because at that moment, the individual does not remain within their individual self. They move into the unmanifest or the background. The mood and power of God are fully awakened and manifested within them. However, that does not mean the individual becomes God. When the mood passes, they may return to being an ordinary person again. The 'mood' or 'state' is what matters. In such a context, it has been said:

"And [beware the Day] when Allah will say, 'O Jesus, Son of Mary, did you say to the people, "Take me and my mother as two deities besides Allah?"' He will say, 'Exalted

are You! It was not for me to say that to which I have no right. If I had said it, You would have known it. You know what is within myself, and I do not know what is within Yourself. Indeed, it is You who is Knower of the unseen. I said not to them except what You commanded me—to worship Allah, my Lord and your Lord... If You should punish them—indeed they are Your servants; and if You forgive them—indeed it is You who is the Exalted in Might, the Wise.'" (Al-Quran 5:116-118)

The one who uses the word "I" in this way to manifest God's word or instruction is himself certain and aware that he is a mortal man—everyone knows that. That is, he is not God. Consequently, knowing, understanding, and accepting that, he presents the matters in that way. He feels no problem in his own knowledge. But problems arise when people misunderstand or misinterpret the matters. Thus it is said:

"Say, 'I am only a man like you...'" (Al-Quran 41:6)

"Indeed, Allah does not forgive association with Him, but He forgives what is less than that for whom He wills. And he who associates others with Allah has certainly gone far astray." (Al-Quran 4:116)

God remains behind many veils through Maya-yoga. He does not speak directly to anyone. As it is said:

"And it is not for any human being that Allah should speak to him except by revelation or from behind a partition or that He sends a messenger to reveal, by His permission, what He wills. Indeed, He is Most High and Wise." (Al-Quran 42:51)

"I am never manifest to the foolish and unintelligent. For them I am covered by My internal potency (Yoga-maya)..." (Gita 7:25)

If that is true, then how can people of a contemporary time be certain that a word is the word of God? God sends His message through someone. The person through whom He sends the instruction or message attains His mood or nature. One must recognize Him by observing the mood of such an inspired person.

To attain anything of God, one must be elevated to His level. He automatically becomes inspired with God-like mood and knowledge. In fact, God Himself inspires him. Without God's grace, nothing is possible for anyone. Power, ability, courage, knowledge—He showers all necessary things upon His chosen person. Within the one who receives God's blessing or grace, a different kind of perception and consciousness works during that contemporary time. As an ordinary human, it would never have been possible for him. Therefore, one must recognize him by observing the mood of such an inspired

person.

Even if such an inspired person uses the word "I," it is not a fault. He does not become God by that. According to the needs of the time, he only receives a specific portion of God's infinite opulence. These matters must be understood with proper knowledge. It is said:

Verse 9.20 Those who study the Vedas and drink the soma juice, seeking the heavenly planets, worship Me indirectly. Purified of sinful reactions, they take birth on the pious, heavenly planet of Indra, where they enjoy godly delights.

Verse 9.21 When they have thus enjoyed vast heavenly sense pleasure and the results of their pious activities are exhausted, they return to this mortal planet again. Thus those who seek sense enjoyment by adhering to the principles of the three Vedas achieve only repeated birth and death.

(Commentary 9.20) Those devoted to rituals and sacrifices follow the rites mentioned in the three Vedas. The three Vedas are the Rig, Yajur, and Sama Vedas. After the sacrifice, they drink the soma juice and become purified and free from sin. By worshipping God through sacrifice, they pray for or desire to go to heaven. In this way, they attain higher planets from the baseness of

material nature—such as Swargaloka, Maharloka, Janaloka, Tapoloka, etc. Attaining these realms allows for millions of times more sense gratification than this world. There, they enjoy happiness like the gods. As it is said:

"Race toward... a Garden whose width is like the width of the heavens and earth." (Al-Quran 57:21)

(Commentary 9.21) They enjoy that vast heavenly realm. Then, when their merit is exhausted, they fall back to the mortal world. Thus, those who desire sense pleasure by following the rites of the three Vedas do not get elevated to the transcendental world of God; instead, they repeatedly move between the higher and lower planets. They continue to revolve in the cycle of birth and death.

Therefore, for complete liberation, one should try to attain the proximity of God. As a result, it will be possible to gain an eternal life of bliss. One will never have to return to this miserable material world again. Liberation from the cycle of birth and death will be achieved. As it is said:

"This worldly life is only [temporary] enjoyment, and indeed, the Hereafter—that is the home of [permanent] settlement." (Al-Quran 40:39)

"There they will say: 'Now death will not reach us anymore.'" (Al-Quran 37:58)

"No fatigue will touch them therein, nor from it will they [ever] be expelled." (Al-Quran 15:48)

Verse 9.22 But those who always worship Me with exclusive devotion, meditating on My transcendental form—to them I carry what they lack, and I preserve what they have.

(Commentary 9.22) For those who meditate on God with unswerving concentration and worship only Him, the Supreme Lord personally provides all their missing necessities and protects what they already possess. This is the result of complete reliance (Tawakkul) on God or Allah. As it is said:

"And whoever fears Allah—He will make for him a way out and will provide for him from where he does not expect. And whoever relies upon Allah—then He is sufficient for him." (Al-Quran 65:2-3)

A question may arise: if one is always absorbed in thoughts of God and dedicated to the welfare of all beings, how will the necessities of the body and family be provided? It is for this reason it is said that the Lord Himself carries the burden of providing what is unobtained and preserving what is obtained for such people.

God provides for everyone, but others must labor to

achieve it. However, for the eternally engaged, true devotee of God, such separate effort is not required. They do not reach this stage through cold calculation; they arrive there naturally by their very essence. They are not at all attentive to worldly matters, yet nothing of theirs is ever halted. Such examples are rare! They are not commonly seen because such exclusive devotion is rare in this world. Sri Krishna says:

Verse 9.23 Those who are devotees of other gods and who worship them with faith actually worship only Me, O son of Kunti, but they do so in a wrong way.

Verse 9.24 I am the only enjoyer and master of all sacrifices. Therefore, those who do not recognize My true transcendental nature fall down.

(Commentary 9.23) Sri Krishna says that those who worship other gods besides the Supreme Lord are essentially worshipping God Himself. However, due to a lack of knowledge, they do not understand this. Even the demigods worship the Supreme Lord. Consequently, all worship eventually reaches God.

In the hope of quick results, some people worship demigods or seek boons from god-like humans or great personalities. But without God's sanction, even demigods have no power to give anything. The demigods

themselves must approach God to secure provisions for others. Thus, it is said:

"Whoever is within the heavens and earth asks Him; every day He is bringing about a matter." (Al-Quran 55:29)

"And those you call upon besides Him are unable to help you, nor can they help themselves." (Al-Quran 7:197)

"Those whom they invoke seek means of access to their Lord, [striving as to] which of them would be nearest." (Al-Quran 17:57)

"Unquestionably, to Allah belongs whoever is in the heavens and whoever is in the earth. And those who invoke other than Allah as partners do not [actually] follow [any] partners. They follow not except assumption, and they are not but falsifying." (Al-Quran 10:66)

Those who worship demigods are indirectly worshipping God, because the demigods, in turn, pray to God for them. Consequently, the worship of demigod-worshippers is "wrongly directed" (avidhi-purvakam); meaning, it is outside the proper rule. The rule is to worship God alone. As it is said:

"And your spiritual object of worship is one God. There is no deity [worthy of worship] except Him, the Entirely Merciful, the Especially Merciful." (Al-Quran 2:163)

"And those who do not invoke with Allah another deity..." (Al-Quran 25:68)

In truth, whether knowingly or unknowingly, everyone seeks only from God. As it is said:

"And to Allah prostrates whoever is within the heavens and the earth, willingly or by compulsion." (Al-Quran 13:15)

God never approves of unnecessary demigod worship. It is said:

"And ask those We sent before you of Our messengers; have We made besides the Most Merciful deities to be worshipped?" (Al-Quran 43:45)

"And Allah has said, 'Do not take for yourselves two deities. He is only one God.'" (Al-Quran 16:51)

(Commentary 9.24) In reality, God is the enjoyer of all sacrifices (Yajnas). He is the Lord and the giver of the fruits of labor. But those who lack proper knowledge of God mistake demigods for the Supreme. Due to this ignorance, they do not attain liberation. Demigods cannot grant liberation. Worshippers of demigods do not reach God, nor do they achieve complete salvation (Moksha). They continue to travel between higher and lower realms. It is said:

"And they worship besides Allah that which does not possess for them [the power of] provision from the heavens and the earth at all, and [in fact], they are unable." (Al-Quran 16:73)

It is further said:

Verse 9.25 Those who worship the demigods will take birth among the demigods; those who worship the ancestors go to the ancestors; those who worship ghosts and spirits will take birth among such beings; and those who worship Me will live with Me.

(Commentary 9.25) One attains whatever one is devoted to or worships. One acquires that specific nature. In practical life, we see that a person tries to adopt the nature of or follow the one they like. Consequently, they behave like them.

In truth, one attains the true desire of their heart. Similarly, worshippers of demigods reach the demigods; they attain their nature or their realm. Worshippers of ghosts and spirits reach ghosts and spirits. Worshippers of ancestors reach the ancestors.

The Vedas describe various rules and regulations for reaching different realms. It is said that by following these rules, it is possible to go to the desired realm. Similarly, through sacrifice, the realm of the ancestors (Pitriloka)

can be reached. As it is said:

"And those who believed and whose descendants followed them in faith—We will join with them their descendants." (Al-Quran 52:21)

On the other hand, those who are exclusively devotees and worshippers of God attain God Himself.

Verse 9.26 If one offers Me with love and devotion a leaf, a flower, fruit or water, I will accept it.

Verse 9.27 Whatever you do, whatever you eat, whatever you offer or give away, and whatever austerities you perform—do that, O son of Kunti, as an offering to Me.

Verse 9.28 In this way you will be freed from bondage to work and its auspicious and inauspicious results. With your mind fixed on Me in this principle of renunciation, you will be liberated and come to Me.

(Commentary 9.26) Attaining God is extremely easy. Even the poorest person can practice this without any specific qualifications. The only thing required is true love. Status, position, or stability do not matter. The path is so simple that even a leaf, a little water, or a fruit can be offered to the Supreme Lord with unalloyed devotion. God accepts anything given by a devotee with a satisfied

heart. Therefore, no one is excluded from receiving the fruits of devotion. This is the easiest and most universal way to reach God. God only wants love and devotion, nothing else. As it is said:

"Their meat will not reach Allah, nor will their blood, but what reaches Him is piety from you." (Al-Quran 22:37)

"That [is so]. And whoever honors the symbols of Allah—indeed, it is from the piety of hearts." (Al-Quran 22:32)

He accepts nothing from a non-devotee. He is self-complete. He has no need to receive anything from anyone. As it is said:

"Indeed, Allah only accepts from the righteous [who guard against evil]." (Al-Quran 5:27)

Everything we do in the name of following religious laws has one goal: to create love and devotion for God or Allah. Various religious rituals are necessary to guide a large population within a discipline. However, once the goal of devotion is achieved, all other goals are naturally attained. Yet, one should not be negligent in following rules, otherwise, the social order will break and chaos will ensue.

God knows everyone. He knows the innermost thoughts of everyone's heart. For one who truly loves Him and

always keeps Him in their heart, many rules are not necessary. Even if they offer a symbolic leaf, flower, fruit, or water, He is pleased. He only wants the love of the heart and nothing else.

(Commentary 9.27) Whatever you do, eat, offer, give, or perform as penance—offer it to Me. This offering is nothing but an expression of devotion to God. It is an expression of gratitude, remembering and acknowledging His endless gifts. He loves this expression, which is an admission of understanding the greatness of God within a truthful heart.

It is said that before every action, one should remember Him or dedicate the act to Him. Even when eating, one should remember Him first. We are alive and eating only because of His grace. This remembrance is an expression of gratitude. This is also an important lesson for mutual human relationships in practical life. It is said:

"And do not eat of that upon which the name of Allah has not been mentioned, for indeed, it is grave disobedience." (Al-Quran 6:121)

"He has only forbidden to you... that which has been dedicated to other than Allah." (Al-Quran 2:173)

Ingratitude is a terrible offense. A person can feel its severity through their own experiences. Ingratitude can

block everything.

Through this remembrance, a person also learns the lesson of sacrifice. By offering small gifts to God selflessly, a person learns to sacrifice for everyone, starting from other living beings. In this way, a person is inspired to perform selfless action (Nishkama Karma), becomes accustomed to it, and realizes its importance.

Without the fundamental principle of devotion, no one can make God accept anything. No scholar, wealthy person, or intellectual can please God with anything else. Devotion is an eternal and universal path. At the beginning of this chapter, this subject was called the most confidential knowledge.

Devotion is such a powerful medium that if a person analyzes their own character, they can realize its importance and greatness. A living being or human is endowed with qualities by the grace of Allah. Through sincere devotion, a human can instantly forgive all the faults and lapses of another human, even an enemy, and accept them. The power of devotion is extraordinary; it is linked to the ability to forgive and accept from the heart.

(Commentary 9.28) If all actions are offered to God in the aforementioned way, a person can be freed from the bondage of all auspicious and inauspicious deeds. With

this consciousness, a person does not work for self-interest alone; they work for the satisfaction of God. Thus, all their work becomes service to the Lord. Renunciation (Sannyasa) here refers to dedicating all actions to God. One who has dedicated their life to the service of God with exclusive devotion is a true 'Sannyasi.' Such a person, freed from bondage, attains God. As it is said:

"And whoever desires other than Islam [submission to God] as religion—never will it be accepted from him, and he, in the Hereafter, will be among the losers." (Al-Quran 3:85)

In this way, by surrendering all actions to God, a person can be freed from the good and bad results of the bondage of work. A soul linked through the yoga of renunciation attains God by working on this principle of sacrifice and becoming free from worldly bondage. It is said:

Verse 9.29 I envy no one, nor am I partial to anyone. I am equal to all. But whoever renders service unto Me in devotion is a friend, is in Me, and I am also a friend to him.

(Commentary 9.29) To attain the nature of God, one must know and understand Him. To tell the truth, even by understanding these things, no one can attain God's

nature unless they desire it sincerely from within, and even then, it is attained only by the grace of God.

Therefore, one must have the mindset or desire to attain that nature by considering it supreme and loving it, even if it means sacrificing everything; and one must be able to live that way in practice. If there is a speck of flaw in the heart, God cannot be attained. What is God like?

God is equal to all living beings. Everyone and everything is His creation, regardless of which species they are born into. Therefore, He generously fulfills all the needs of every living creature. As it is said:

"O you who have believed! ... Whether he is rich or poor, Allah is more worthy of both." (Al-Quran 4:135)

"And how many a creature carries not its [own] provision. Allah provides for it and for you. And He is the Hearing, the Knowing." (Al-Quran 29:60)

He is not even slightly envious of anyone, nor is anyone His absolute favorite. He is not tainted by partiality; He is neutral. However, those who worship and adore God with devotion reside in His proximity. He also dwells within them. He keeps a special eye on His devotees; He is pleased and satisfied with them. As it is said:

"Allah is pleased with them and they are pleased with

Him." (Al-Quran 5:119)

"He will admit them to gardens beneath which rivers flow, wherein they abide eternally. Allah is pleased with them, and they are pleased with Him." (Al-Quran 58:22)

Verse 9.30 Even if one commits the most abominable action, if he is engaged in devotional service he is to be considered saintly because he is properly situated in his determination.

Verse 9.31 He quickly becomes righteous and attains lasting peace. O son of Kunti, declare it boldly that My devotee never perishes.

(Commentary 9.30-31) Even if someone appears to be highly wicked, if they worship God with exclusive devotion, it must be understood that they have an awakened heart. They are not indifferent. They contemplate good and evil. Therefore, they are situated in proper knowledge. Within them, there is fear and devotion toward God, or thoughts regarding the consequences and accountability of actions. Because they are situated in the right place with full knowledge, such a person should be considered a saint (Sadhu).

Even if they make a temporary mistake, such a person quickly becomes a righteous soul. In fact, a devotee of God who is devoted from the depth of the heart never

perishes. Even if they deviate, they return to the right place in time. As it is said:

"...those who, when they commit an immorality or wrong themselves [by transgression], remember Allah and seek forgiveness for their sins—and who can forgive sins except Allah?—and [who] do not persist in what they have done while they know." (Al-Quran 3:135)

The greatness of the tendency toward devotion is such that God becomes forgiving toward His devotee. He rescues them from danger and shows the right path. However, it must also be understood that God accepts them because their heart is correctly situated. The influence of Maya is such that even a devotee sometimes falls into a trap. A devotee's accidental fall is halted in due time.

There is a provision in the Vedas for performing atonement (Prayashchitta) for purifying the heart after falling from an elevated stage. But for a devotee, it is different. By constantly thinking of the Lord, their heart becomes naturally pure and clean. Devotion is such a powerful medium that it purifies everything. As it is said:

"Allah only accepts the repentance of those who do evil in ignorance and then repent soon after." (Al-Quran 4:17)

"And give good tidings to the believers that they will have

from Allah great bounty." (Al-Quran 33:47)

Verse 9.32 O son of Pritha, those who take shelter in Me, though they be of lower birth—women, vaishyas [merchants] and shudras [workers]—can attain the supreme destination.

Verse 9.33 How much more this is so of the righteous brahmanas, the devotees and the saintly kings. Therefore, having come to this temporary, miserable world, engage in loving service unto Me.

Verse 9.34 Engage your mind always in thinking of Me, become My devotee, offer obeisances to Me and worship Me. Being completely absorbed in Me, surely you will come to Me.

(Commentary 9.32) Women, Vaishyas, Shudras, and even those born of sinful wombs (Chandalas), who are considered low or untouchable in prevailing concepts—Sri Krishna says that if they become believers in God, focus their minds on God, always remember God with devotion, and worship Him, they too can attain the supreme destination. They can reach the ultimate goal. They too attain God. Such is the greatness of devotion to God!

To attain God, one does not need high or low status, caste, formal education, or rank. One only needs to be a

believer, be prone to devotion, and always remember Him with a sincere heart. As it is said:

"Indeed... the remembrance of Allah is greater." (Al-Quran 29:45)

"As for those who believed and did righteous deeds, for them will be the Gardens of Refuge as accommodation for what they used to do." (Al-Quran 32:19)

Everyone has an equal right to the path of devotion. There is no distinction of caste, creed, high or low here. Such distinctions are only applicable to the lifestyle of the material world. As humans, all people are equal and one. Everyone has the right to move toward the ultimate goal. Devotion is such a powerful medium that it can grant supreme perfection even to a so-called low-caste pure devotee. This is possible only by surrendering to the remembrance of God.

(Commentary 9.33) If God accepts women, Vaishyas, Shudras, and even sinners when they surrender to Him, then what is there to say about saintly kings (Rajarsis)? They have already attained this world. Despite enjoying all the pleasures of this miserable world, they have not forgotten God. They remember Him with devotion and worship Him. They will certainly attain the supreme destination. Sri Krishna is giving that assurance to Arjuna.

(Commentary 9.34) One must always remember God in the heart. One must become devoted to Him. One must offer obeisances (Namaskar or Sajda) through worship. If one can be completely absorbed in God and link oneself with Him, it will be possible to attain God. As it is said:

"And remember the name of your Lord and devote yourself to Him with [complete] devotion." (Al-Quran 73:8)

"O you who have believed, remember Allah with much remembrance and exalt Him morning and afternoon." (Al-Quran 33:41-42)

"He has certainly succeeded who purifies himself and remembers the name of his Lord and prays." (Al-Quran 87:14-15)

"O you who have believed, bow and prostrate and worship your Lord and do good—that you may succeed." (Al-Quran 22:77)

A question may arise in someone's mind: why are examples of Allah being cited alongside God while explaining the Gita? The truth is, there is only one Creator for all the people of the world. But no one knows Him with absolute certainty. Therefore, He who is Bhagavan is also Allah, and He is also God. All conventional differences are the result of humans not knowing the truth. This does not

change the essence of Allah, Bhagavan, or God. He is inexhaustible and imperishable. If anything needs to be changed, it is the flawed concepts of humans.

The knowledge of devotion is called the "most confidential knowledge" here. This knowledge is infallible in achieving the goal. Through this, God can be attained easily and certainly. The results obtained by working with this knowledge are never exhausted. Therefore, it is inexhaustible and imperishable. On this path, one does not even have to enter the complexities of many rules and regulations. Therefore, this is the most excellent and easy way to attain God. Although it may seem so due to the lack of complexity in rules, it is not against religion.

Marvelous Gita by AZM Alamgir

Chapter 10: Vibhuti Vistara Yoga

(The Opulence of the Absolute)

(Total Verses: 42)

Summary: Similar to the previous two chapters, this chapter presents concepts regarding the Supreme Lord and His creation. When a person properly understands God's opulence and power, they can grasp His greatness and become humble and bowed before Him. This chapter highlights the divine glories of the Lord. It explains how, by knowing God and becoming humble, one can attain Him. If one knows God thoroughly and performs actions in the proper way, there is no need to renounce work. One can remain free from bondage even while performing worldly duties.

Verses and Commentary

Verse 10.1 The Supreme Lord said: O mighty-armed Arjuna, listen again to My supreme word. Because you are My dear friend, for your benefit I shall speak to you.

Verse 10.2 Neither the hosts of demigods nor the great sages know My origin, for, in every respect, I am the source of the demigods and sages.

Verse 10.3 He who knows Me as the unborn, as the beginningless, as the Supreme Lord of all the worlds—he only, undeluded among mortals, is freed from all sins.

(Commentary 10.1-2) Arjuna is greatly pleased to hear Sri Krishna's wisdom-filled words. Although God has been spoken of previously, for Arjuna's welfare, Sri Krishna asks him to listen further regarding the Divine.

By nature, humans possess an inherent curiosity about creation and the Creator. This is a condition imposed by the Creator Himself. The creation behaves exactly as the Creator designed it. The creation seeks to know about itself and its source. But does anyone truly know these things? Who knows? Is it the worshipful demigods or the great sages?

Marvelous Gita by AZM Alamgir

Sri Krishna definitively removes the hesitation, conflict, and doubt existing in the human mind. He says no one knows God—neither the demigods nor the great sages. God is the Creator or the original cause of even the demigods and all sages. Consequently, it is never possible for the creation to fully know the Creator. This is only possible if the Creator Himself reveals Himself before His creation.

The gods and goddesses of heaven and the great sages try to know the Creator; even today, they have not fully known Him. God is inconceivable. He exists, yet He cannot be fully grasped. All gods and goddesses were created in this world. God is distinct even from the original great gods like Brahma and Shiva. He is their Creator too. As it is said:

"Those whom they invoke seek means of access to their Lord, [striving as to] which of them would be nearest." (Al-Quran 17:57)

(Commentary 10.3) One must know God as unborn and beginningless and must know and accept Him as the Lord of the entire universe. That is, one must become a believer in this regard. These are the conditions. There is no room for argument here. Only then will it be possible to achieve the path of liberation and peace shown here.

Naturally, one who does not accept the scriptures as authentic or does not believe in the words of the scriptures will not follow that path. Consequently, they will not achieve peace. To get results from anything, one must walk that path. To walk it, one must have respect, devotion, and faith in that matter.

Although it is said that these are conditions and one must bring faith to these conditions, they are not irrational even to common sense. No one knows how this universe was created or who created it. No creation happened without a Creator. Therefore, a God is indeed behind it. It is more logical to think this way, even with very simple knowledge. Thus, one must first have faith in one God as the Creator and sustainer of the entire world. This falls within the realm of logic. It is not called blindness. Blindness is a different matter.

Since the origin and birth of the Creator are unknown and impossible to know, He is unborn and beginningless. All this is established on the basis of logic. Therefore, it is truth. It is natural that He existed before creation and is distinct and higher than His creation. Thus, such a perceptive person is called "undeluded." God is above all things. As it is said:

"Say, 'He is Allah, [who is] One. Allah, the Eternal Refuge. He neither begets nor is born, nor is there to Him any

equivalent.'" (Al-Quran 112:1-4)

The question is: why is a person called sinless if they know Him as beginningless, unborn, and the Lord of the whole world?

One who believes in the words of the scripture will follow the directions of the path prescribed by the scripture. By following the scriptural path, a person will avoid the evil path and walk the good path. Scriptures never tell one to walk an evil path. Consequently, they will remain free from sin. One who is free from sin will certainly remain free from any path of delusion. Therefore, such a perceptive person is called undeluded and sinless. It is said:

"Indeed, Allah does not order immorality." (Al-Quran 7:28-29)

"So whoever guides himself, it is only for [the benefit of] his soul; and whoever goes astray only goes astray against it." (Al-Quran 10:108)

Verse 10.4 Intelligence, knowledge, freedom from doubt and delusion, forgiveness, truthfulness, self-control, happiness and distress, birth and death, fear and fearlessness.

Verse 10.5 Nonviolence, equanimity, satisfaction,

austerity, charity, fame and infamy—all these various qualities of living beings are created by Me alone.

Verse 10.6 The seven great sages and before them the four other great sages and the Manus [progenitors of mankind] come from Me, born from My mind. All the living beings peopling the various planets descend from them.

(Commentary 10.4-5) Before creation, there was no existence of creation or living beings. For that which has no existence, there is no question of having its own qualities. He who created the creation is the source of all qualities of the creation. Therefore, the qualities of the Creator have been attributed differently to various creations. Consequently, the Creator is the source of all qualities of all creation—both matter and spirit. All qualities come from God. The Creator is the upholder of all qualities.

God is the source of all the states or qualities of living beings mentioned above. None of His qualities are evil. All qualities are necessary for life and the world. They appear as evil through misuse by humans. Those who misuse their abilities follow the path of delusion. God is the source of all qualities, both good and those appearing as evil. One must develop these qualities within the heart. As it is said:

"And have shown him the two ways [of good and evil]? But he has not broken through the difficult pass." (Al-Quran 90:10-11)

The cited qualities exist in the societies of humans and gods throughout the universe. They also exist on other planets. These qualities are manifestations of various powers and abilities of God. They are all included within His Vibhuti (opulence).

(Commentary 10.6) These verses provide a concept regarding the creation and expansion of all progeny or children in the universe. God first creates the first living being, 'Brahma.' From Brahma, the seven sages are created, and before them, four other great sages, and then the fourteen Manus.

The seven sages are Bhrigu, Marichi, Atri, Angira, Pulaha, Pulastya, and Kratu. The four great sages are Sanaka, Sananda, Sanatana, and Sanat-kumara. The fourteen Manus are Svayambhuva, Svarocisa, Uttama, Tamasa, Raivata, Caksusa, Vaivasvata, Savarni, Daksa-savarni, Brahma-savarni, Dharma-savarni, Rudra-savarni, Deva-savarni, and Indra-savarni. These twenty-five individuals are the original patriarchs of all living beings and progeny in the entire universe.

For the sake of understanding, in the style of human

relationships, Brahma is symbolically called the 'grandfather' and God the 'great-grandfather.' They are all endowed with God's nature and are meditative upon God. As stated in the Bible, God created man in His own image or nature.

All creation is created from the desire of God's mind. The will-power of God is extremely significant. In the case of creation, Nature (Prakriti) is the material cause; that is, all materials for creation exist in Nature. But without the will of God, creation is not completed. The will-power of God is the primary cause. As it is said:

"Allah creates what He wills. When He decrees a matter, He only says to it, 'Be,' and it is." (Al-Quran 3:47)

There are infinite universes in the world. In each universe, there are countless planets. Each planet is inhabited by various creatures. All are born from these aforementioned twenty-five. As it is said:

"It is He who created for you all of that which is on the earth. Then He directed Himself to the heaven and made them seven heavens." (Al-Quran 2:29)

Many gods and goddesses are engaged in various planets for the management of the universe. Their chiefs are Brahma, Shiva, and the Prajapatis. As it is said:

"By those [angels] lined up in rows... [They say], 'There is not among us any except that he has a known position. And indeed, we are those who line up [for prayer]. And indeed, we are those who exalt [Allah].'" (Al-Quran 37:1, 164-166)

"Who disposes the affairs?... Will you not then fear Him?" (Al-Quran 10:31)

"He arranges [each] matter from the heaven to the earth." (Al-Quran 32:5)

The inhabitants of the universe have emerged from many Prajapatis, and all Prajapatis are God's creation. God is the origin. These are just a few manifestations of God's infinite opulence.

Verse 10.7 One who is factually convinced of this opulence and yoga of Mine engages in unalloyed devotional service; of this there is no doubt.

Verse 10.8 I am the source of all spiritual and material worlds. Everything emanates from Me. The wise who perfectly know this engage in My devotional service and worship Me with all their hearts.

Verse 10.9 The thoughts of My pure devotees dwell in Me, their lives are fully devoted to My service, and they derive great satisfaction and bliss from always

enlightening one another and conversing about Me.

(Commentary 10.7) If a person cannot properly know God and His opulence and Vibhuti, they cannot realize His greatness. Consequently, devotion and faith in Him are not properly established. Thus, it is said:

"What is [the matter] with you that you do not attribute to Allah [due] grandeur while He has created you in stages?" (Al-Quran 71:13-14)

In truth, humans are worshippers of the powerful, the influential, or the capable. He who has the power to benefit or harm is the capable one. Therefore, God's opulence and capability must be presented before humans. As it is said:

"Do you worship besides Allah that which does not possess for you [the power of] harm or benefit?" (Al-Quran 5:76)

In this chapter, concepts regarding various opulences of God are presented. The highest limit of spiritual or transcendental perfection is knowing God. When we learn of the vastness, greatness, and omnipotence of God, our hearts become humble toward Him. We accept God from the heart with deep respect and become prone to devotion. We engage in His service or fulfill our duty toward Him. Then, without doubt, we seek

everything only from Him. We do not approach anyone else.

Therefore, to attain God, one must know Him properly. One must awaken love and devotion within oneself through proper knowledge. To increase the desire for God's service with love and devotion, it is necessary to have spiritual knowledge or knowledge of God's truth.

(Commentary 10.8) Humans did not create humans. The demigods also did not create humans. Furthermore, the demigods are also God's creation. God is the cause of the creation and origin of everything. All powers, qualities, and capabilities of living beings emanate from Him. He supplies all the sustenance for survival through various processes. Because wise and perceptive people know this, they worship only God. They do not worship anyone else. As it is said:

"That is Allah, your Lord; there is no deity except Him, the Creator of all things, so worship Him. And He is Disposer of all things." (Al-Quran 6:102)

(Commentary 10.9) Those who surrender their minds and lives to God because of knowing His opulence and greatness find no reason to do anything else anywhere. They see that as the only goal. They remain absorbed only in God. All their activities, speech, and movements are

mixed with the thought of God. Consequently, even when they speak among themselves or interact with others, love and devotion for God blossom at the center of all their discussions. They explain the glory and significance of God to others and discourage them from becoming excessively involved in worldly matters. In these acts, they find great satisfaction and feel immense bliss.

They try to perceive the processes of God's activities. Those who research science and knowledge are, in fact, knowingly or unknowingly, believers or non-believers, devotees of God. They search for Him, and through them, the inhabitants of the world can properly know the true greatness of God.

Verse 10.10 To those who are constantly devoted to serving Me with love, I give the understanding by which they can come to Me.

Verse 10.11 To show them special mercy, I, dwelling in their hearts, destroy with the shining lamp of knowledge the darkness born of ignorance.

(Commentary 10.10) It was said earlier that no one knows God—neither the demigods nor the great sages. God is the Creator and original cause of the demigods and all sages. Consequently, it is never possible for the

creation to know the Creator. This is only possible if the Creator Himself reveals Himself before His creation.

God dwells in the hearts of everyone. He reveals Himself in the heart of the pure devotee. He cannot be attained through logic and argument alone. One can try to know Him bit by bit through scientific research, but there is no knowing where the end of it is. If one proceeds that way, one might even witness the ultimate dissolution. Therefore, in this case, devotion is the only best path. What is called devotion here is also called faith elsewhere. Devotion will not come without faith. Again, faith is born as a result of devotion.

It is said that for those devotees who are always attached to God and worship or adore Him with great sincerity, He Himself grants them the intelligence and knowledge so that they can attain Him. He loves His devotees.

(Commentary 10.11) When an attraction toward God is created in the heart, the thought of God comes naturally, and other thoughts find no place. God reveals Himself in their hearts. By removing the blackness of darkness, He illuminates their interior with the light of knowledge. Knowledge becomes radiant. As it is said:

"O you who have believed, fear Allah... He will give you a light by which you will walk." (Al-Quran 57:28)

"And those who are guided—He increases them in guidance." (Al-Quran 47:17)

"He gives wisdom to whom He wills, and whoever has been given wisdom has certainly been given much good." (Al-Quran 2:269)

God's love for the devotee is even greater than the devotee's love for Him. He Himself removes the darkness of their hearts and illuminates them by lighting the lamp of knowledge. In the heart of the devotee, a tendency similar to His own arises. By His grace, they can understand everything necessary. It must also be understood that there are certain processes for all this. Having become aware of all these opulences of God, Arjuna says:

Verse 10.12 You are the Supreme Brahman, the ultimate truth, the supreme abode and purifier. All the great sages such as Narada, Asita, Devala and Vyasa proclaim You as the eternal, divine person, the self-luminous and the original God, unborn and all-pervading.

Verse 10.13 And now You Yourself are proclaiming this to me.

Verse 10.14 O Krishna, I totally accept as truth all that You have told me. O Lord, neither the demigods nor the demons can understand Your personality.

Verse 10.15 Indeed, You alone know Yourself by Your own internal potency, O Supreme Person, origin of all, Lord of all beings, God of gods, Lord of the universe!

Verse 10.16 Please tell me in detail of Your divine opulences by which You pervade all these worlds.

(Commentary 10.12-16) After hearing Sri Krishna's words, Arjuna understands that God is indeed everything. Our individual goals in this world carry no real value unless we can integrate them with the purpose for which He created us.

Arjuna listens to and contemplates Sri Krishna's message with deep attention, establishing a knowledge-based faith in God and accepting all His glories from the heart. Here, his inner feelings are revealed. He has realized that even the demigods do not fully know God; they also seek Him. As it is said:

"Those whom they invoke seek means of access to their Lord." (Al-Quran 17:57)

Even the great personages, gods, and angels whom we consider our guides do not fully know or comprehend God. As it is said:

"He said, 'My Lord, show [Yourself] to me that I may look at You.' [Allah] said, 'You will not see Me, but look at the

mountain; if it should remain in its place, then you will see Me.' But when his Lord appeared to the mountain, He rendered it as dust, and Moses fell unconscious. And when he awoke, he said, 'Exalted are You! I have repented to You, and I am the first of the believers.'" (Al-Quran 7:143)

The actual truth is that God alone is the Living One, and from Him, life and consciousness emerge in everyone. He is the source, cause, and sustainer of everything. No one knows Him except Himself. Through His Vibhuti—His power, greatness, attributes, and capability—He is all-pervading throughout all beings and everywhere. As it is said:

"To Allah belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth. And ever is Allah, of all things, encompassing." (Al-Quran 4:126)

Those who do not possess faith and devotion will never be able to know Him. Without an inquisitive mind and devotion, one can never penetrate deep into any subject. Since one does not delve deep into a subject they lack devotion for, they cannot know the hidden mysteries of the Truth. Faith, devotion, and love are required first to know anything.

Arjuna, having internalized these matters, expresses his

realization and says that only God is capable of describing the divine opulences by which He stands pervading all worlds. It is not possible for anyone else to reveal them, as no one else knows them. Seeking to know more, Arjuna asks:

Verse 10.17 O Krishna, O supreme mystic, how shall I constantly think of You, and how shall I know You? In what various forms are You to be remembered, O Supreme Personality of Godhead?

Verse 10.18 O Janardana, please describe again in detail the mystic power of Your opulences. I am never satiated in hearing Your nectar-like words.

[Sri Krishna is addressed here as Yogeshvara, meaning the Lord of Yoga. Yoga refers to skill, specifically the skill of creation. He is the Lord of the skill of creation.]

(Commentary 10.17) Arjuna wants to know from Sri Krishna how one should meditate to know the Supreme Lord. In what way should one concentrate on Him?

Those who have shown us the way through the ages were also often in various states of perplexity: How to worship God? How to meditate on Him? How to focus? These matters were not always clear even to them.

Whether we call Him Bhagavan or Allah, He has sent

knowledge to human society through various processes. Because of this, today we have an orderly system and a social life; otherwise, we might still be wandering in confusion. Just as Arjuna asks here how to concentrate on God, Ibrahim (AS) similarly asked:

"Our Lord... and show us our rites [of worship]." (Al-Quran 2:128)

Even today, those who claim to be believers but do not follow the path shown by God wander in confusion. They lead undisciplined lives. They do not know the supreme goal of life; consequently, they have no desire or effort to achieve that goal. This life is held in vain! Thus, it is said:

"O you who have believed, fear Allah and seek the means [of nearness] to Him and strive in His cause that you may succeed." (Al-Quran 5:35)

(Commentary 10.18) 'Vibhuti' means 'extraordinary opulence.' Here, Vibhuti or God's opulence refers to His power, capability, attributes, and strength by which He controls and sustains everything—or, one might say, directs the universe, life, and the world.

In reality, the manifestation of divine power is everywhere in the world. However, those things which possess extreme opulence are considered special expressions of His power. Vibhuti here refers to those.

One must also be careful not to mistake a single Vibhuti for God Himself. Each Vibhuti is merely a small manifestation of the Supreme Lord's opulences. As it is said:

"And of His signs are... the sun and the moon. Do not prostrate to the sun or to the moon, but prostate to Allah, who created them." (Al-Quran 41:37)

Electrical energy, chemical energy, mechanical energy, thermal energy, atomic energy, light energy, sound energy, magnetic energy, kinetic energy, gravity... all the energies we study, or all the subjects science researches, are in fact a search for the Vibhuti of God or Allah. Science does not only search for these opulences; it promotes and describes the attributes and greatness of God most appropriately. Knowing this, others are compelled to follow science or harmonize their philosophy with it. Those who dedicate themselves to science are actually engaged in the worship of God. Think deeply: what is worship? What do we actually do in worship?

Arjuna wants to know more in detail about God's creative skill and His Vibhuti or opulence and powers—how He remains all-pervading, how He sustains everything, and so on. Even after hearing Sri Krishna's nectar-like words, his thirst for this knowledge is not quenched. Sri Krishna

says:

Verse 10.19 The Supreme Lord said: Yes, I will speak to you of My splendid manifestations, but only of those which are prominent, O Arjuna, for My opulence is limitless.

Verse 10.20 I am the Self, O Gudakesha, seated in the hearts of all living entities. I am the beginning, the middle and the end of all beings.

(Commentary 10.19) There is no limit to God's capability. His power and capacity are infinite. He can do everything. Therefore, it is impossible to finish describing this subject. Sri Krishna says that for the sake of understanding or to provide a conceptual framework, only the prominent aspects are being mentioned. As it is said:

"Indeed, Allah does what He intends... Indeed, Allah is over all things competent." (Al-Quran 22:14, 24:45)

"Allah—there is no deity except Him. To Him belong the best names." (Al-Quran 20:8)

Whether we say Ishvara, Bhagavan, Allah, or God, all His names are beautiful, great, and significant, and His attributes are expressed within His names. His power and capability are manifested in His attributes. His glory and opulence are expressed in His names. In the Al-Quran as

well, many such glorious names of Allah are mentioned.

Just as He exists within the infinitely large, He also exists within the smallest of the small. His expansion is infinite—inconceivable and beyond imagination!

Realizing the full greatness and expansion of God is not easy. There is limitation inherent in a created being. It is not possible to understand the infinite with a limited mind. Yet, humans try to know. But full realization is perhaps not possible.

God knows that living beings cannot find the end of His power or Vibhuti. To facilitate understanding, a few things are described here, much like giving a set of formulas. In both the living and material worlds, God's infinite power and capability are expressed or manifested in various ways. As it is said:

"And [He has subjected] whatever He multiplied for you on the earth of varying colors. Indeed in that is a sign for a people who remember." (Al-Quran 16:13)

Through His Yoga-maya (mystic power), God manifests Himself in some places and remains unmanifest in others. For instance, two names of Allah are 'Allahu Zahir' (He is Manifest/Expressed) and 'Allahu Batin' (He is Unmanifest/Hidden). The believer or devotee perceives both the manifest and unmanifest greatness of God and

becomes prone to devotion. However, others must use material-worldly methods of thought and research to know and understand Him. What researchers do with a concentrated mind is, in essence, a search for God. They remain absorbed in His meditation. Scientific research essentially does that work. These are the works of Sankhya. For ease of understanding, some of God's infinite opulences are presented here.

(Commentary 10.20) It is said that God is the Self (Atma) situated in the hearts of all living beings. Because of the presence of the Atma, the body of a living being is alive, active, conscious, and developing. The Paramatma (Supersoul) is a manifestation of God. The soul of God's universal form is the Paramatma. Until the Paramatma God enters, even the material world does not develop in any way. God is, in fact, the only living entity. By His touch, everything else becomes alive. In this way, the relationship between the living being and God is maintained. God is situated in the hearts of all beings. As it is said:

"Allah intervenes between a man and his heart." (Al-Quran 8:24)

To keep the relationship between the Jivatma (individual soul) and the Paramatma alive, constant nurturing is required. For those who do not do this properly, their true

knowledge becomes covered by worldly delusion, and they become lost. Being lost, they forget the relationship with God and go astray. Forgetting what should be done or their duty, they want to establish dominance in the world themselves. They become attached to wealth, power, and various matters. They do not achieve liberation from material-worldly bondage.

Every independent living being has a beginning which they do not remember. There is a middle time which is ongoing, and there is an end-time whose outcome is unknown to them. God is the original cause of everyone's birth or creation. He is the cause of life and also the cause of death. Similarly, this universe has a beginning and an end, and an ongoing time. As it is said:

"He it is who created you from clay and then decreed a term and a specified time [known] to Him." (Al-Quran 6:2)

God is complete and perfect. He is the beginning, the middle, and the end. He is the past, He is the present, and He is the future. He has no death. He is the Ever-Living. He is aware of everything. Origin, maintenance, dissolution, and birth-death and life are also God. As it is said:

"He is the First and the Last... and He is, of all things, Knowing." (Al-Quran 57:3)

"Allah, Lord of the heavens and the earth and whatever is between them." (Al-Quran 38:66)

It is said that the Supreme Cause of all causes, the Supreme Lord, lies in the Causal Ocean in the form of Maha-Vishnu. As it is said:

"And He it is who created the heavens and the earth... and His Throne was upon water." (Al-Quran 11:7)

Verse 10.21 Of the Adityas I am Vishnu, of luminaries I am the radiant sun, of the Maruts I am Marici, and among the stars I am the moon.

Verse 10.22 Of the Vedas I am the Sama Veda; of the demigods I am Indra, the king of heaven; of the senses I am the mind; and in living beings I am the living force [consciousness].

Verse 10.23 Of all the Rudras I am Lord Shiva, of the Yakshas and Rakshasas I am the Lord of wealth [Kuvera], of the Vasus I am fire [Agni], and of mountains I am Meru.

Verse 10.24 Of priests, O Arjuna, know Me to be the chief, Brihaspati. Of generals I am Kartikeya, and of bodies of water I am the ocean.

Verse 10.25 Of the great sages I am Bhrigu; of utterances I am the transcendental Om. Of sacrifices I am the chanting of the holy names [japa], and of

immovable things I am the Himalayas.

(Commentary 10.21) Concepts regarding various Vibhuti (opulences) of God are being presented here. For example, among the twelve Adityas, God is the chief named Vishnu. Among the countless bright stars in the sky, the sun is primary. Fifty types of wind are blowing in the atmosphere. The controlling deity of these is 'Marici,' who is a representative of God. That is, God is the chief or the best in every field.

(Commentary 10.22) Generally, among the Vedas, the Rig Veda is considered primary. But because the Sama Veda is primary in rhythm and melody, its power of attraction is given priority in the path of devotion (bhakti-marga). Therefore, in the rituals of sacrifice, the Sama Veda is given prominence. In this context, the Sama Veda is the best.

The chief deity of the heavenly kingdom is 'Indra.' He is called the King of Heaven. The planet under his rule is called Indraloka. The center of all sensory perceptions is the mind; the mind is primary. Consciousness is the proof of life. The difference between matter and spirit is that matter does not have consciousness like a living entity. Consciousness is supreme and eternal. God is within all greatness. There is no one above Him, nothing above Him. As it is said:

"Nor is there to Him any equivalent." (Al-Quran 112:4)

(Commentary 10.23) Among the eleven Rudras, Shankara or Shiva is the chief. He is the controller of the mode of ignorance (tamo-guna) in the universe and a qualitative incarnation of God. The lord of the Yakshas and Rakshasas, 'Kuvera,' is the treasurer of all the wealth of the gods and a representative of God. On the high peaks, God is Meru.

(Commentary 10.24) Among those engaged in the responsibility of directing nature, Indra is the chief. Brihaspati is the priest of Indra. Since Indra is the chief among all kings, Brihaspati is the chief among all priests. Similarly, Skanda (Kartikeya), the son of Shiva and Parvati, is the chief among all military commanders. Among all bodies of water, the ocean is the chief. These indicate the greatness of God.

(Commentary 10.25) Brahma, the first created being in the universe, created several sons to create different species. Among those sons, the most powerful and radiant is the great sage 'Bhrigu.'

Among all transcendental sounds, the vibration 'Om' or 'Omkara,' representing the Supreme Brahman, represents God. Among all sacrifices, the chanting of the names of Krishna and Rama is the supreme sacrifice.

Whatever is most glorious in the world is a symbol of God. Therefore, the Himalayas, the greatest mountain on earth, is His symbol.

Regarding sacrifices, various types are mentioned, such as sacrifice of possessions, sacrifice of knowledge, sacrifice of Brahman, sacrifice of penance, etc. However, among all sacrifices, the sacrifice of chanting (Japa-yagna) or the sacrifice of the Name is the best. In the Vedic age, sacrifice of goods or animal sacrifice was prominent. Later, sacrifice of knowledge took that place. Eventually, in the philosophy of devotion, Japa-yagna gained the highest place.

In fact, the entire world is composed of names and forms. Whatever feeling arises from the mind has a name. It can be said that feeling, name, and form are the same. As it is said:

"And He taught Adam the names—all of them... Then He said, 'Inform Me of the names of these.' They said, 'Exalted are You; we have no knowledge except what You have taught us.' He said, 'O Adam, inform them of their names.'" (Al-Quran 2:31-33)

Behind everything in the entire universe, there is a name. A name is essentially a sound. Therefore, behind everything, there is a sound. The significance of the name

or sound is immense! This Name is spoken of as Shabda-Brahman. As it is said:

"When He decrees a matter, He only says to it, 'Be,' and it is." (Al-Quran 2:117)

A single word is a command. Everything happens by it. The greatness of the word is immense! However, it must also be understood that there is some process behind everything. Understanding these matters is not that easy.

Just as not everyone can hear the sounds created from all sound waves, a heart that always remembers God can hear many things. As it is said:

"And if you speak aloud—then indeed, He knows the secret and what is [even] more hidden." (Al-Quran 20:7)

He knows the one who always remembers God or Allah in the heart and chants His name. This is a supreme form of worship. The importance and greatness of chanting the Name (Nama-japa) is boundless. It has a profound influence on the mind.

Verse 10.26 Of all trees I am the banyan tree, and among the divine sages I am Narada. Of the Gandharvas I am Citraratha, and among perfected beings I am the sage Kapila.

(Commentary 10.26) The banyan (Ashvattha) tree is the

most majestic and beautiful among trees. The celestial sage Narada is considered the foremost devotee of God; he is a manifestation of God in the form of a devotee. The inhabitants of Gandharvaloka are experts in the art of music, and among them, Citraratha is the greatest musician. Among the Siddhas (perfected beings), Kapiladeva is the representative of God. He is the progenitor of Sankhya philosophy and is renowned as a knower of ultimate spiritual truths. He is an incarnation of God.

Verse 10.27 Of horses know Me to be Uccaishrava, produced during the churning of the ocean for nectar. Of lordly elephants I am Airavata, and among men I am the monarch.

(Commentary 10.27) Once, the gods (devotees of God) and the demons (enemies of God) participated in the churning of the ocean. From this churning, both nectar (Amrita) and poison emerged; Lord Shiva drank the poison to save the world. Many beings were born from the nectar. The horse named Uccaishrava and the elephant named Airavata originated from this nectar. Since these two animals emerged from nectar, they hold special significance.

Among men, the ruler or monarch is the representative of God. They occupy that position due to being endowed

with divine qualities. Although God alone directs and controls everything, as it is said:

"He shares not His legislation [or authority] with anyone." (Al-Quran 18:26)

Verse 10.28 Of weapons I am the thunderbolt; among cows I am the Surabhi. Of causes for procreation I am Kandarpa, the god of love, and of serpents I am Vasuki.

(Commentary 10.28) The thunderbolt (Vajra) possesses infinite power and represents God. In the spiritual world, there are cows called Surabhi from whom any amount of milk can be obtained at any time. Kandarpa is the god of love (Kamadeva), whose influence results in the birth of good offspring.

Verse 10.29 Of the many-hooded Nagas I am Ananta, and among the aquatic deities I am Varuna. Of departed ancestors I am Aryama, and among the dispensers of law I am Yama, the lord of death.

(Commentary 10.29) Among the multi-hooded Nagas, Ananta is the foremost. Among aquatic beings, Varuna is the chief. There is a planetary world for ancestors (Pitris), and the presiding deity of that world is Aryama. Among those who punish the sinful, the chief is Yamaraja.

Verse 10.30 Among the Daitya demons I am the devoted

Prahlada, among subduers I am time, among beasts I am the lion, and among birds I am Garuda.

(Commentary 10.30) Diti and Aditi were two sisters. The sons of Aditi are called Adityas, and the sons of Diti are called Daityas. All Adityas are devotees of God, while all Daityas are atheistic. Although Prahlada was born among the Daityas, he was a great devotee of God.

There are many ways of subduing, but time (Kala) defeats everything in this material world. Everything is subdued by time. Among beasts, the lion is the most powerful and fierce. Among the bird species, the great winged carrier of Vishnu, Garuda, is the best.

Verse 10.31 Of purifiers I am the wind, of the wielders of weapons I am Parashurama, of fishes I am the shark, and of flowing rivers I am the Ganges.

(Commentary 10.31) Of all purifiers, God is the wind; among wielders of weapons, He is 'Parashurama'; among fish, He is the 'shark' (Makara); and among flowing rivers, He is the 'Ganges.' He exists within all excellence.

Verse 10.32 Of all creations, O Arjuna, I am the beginning and the end and also the middle. Of all sciences I am the spiritual science of the self, and among logicians I am the conclusive truth.

(Commentary 10.32) Within creation, God is the beginning, middle, and end. From the start to the finish of all creation, only He remains. He alone is the Knower of all. As it is said:

"He is the First and the Last, the Ascendant and the Intimate, and He is, of all things, Knowing." (Al-Quran 57:3)

Maha-Vishnu performs the work of creating and directing the universe. Shiva performs the dissolution. Brahma is the secondary creator. All these representatives are qualitative incarnations of the Supreme Lord. Creation, maintenance, and dissolution—beginning, middle, and end—God alone prevails everywhere.

It is noteworthy that some scriptures use names like Vishnu, Shiva, or Brahma, while others use Jibrail, Azrail, or Mikail. In essence, these names are symbolic. Just as in chemistry or astronomy, specific symbolic names are used to identify elements or celestial bodies, these matters are similar.

Symbols and chemical substances have different names in different languages. Similarly, in all fields or subjects, names vary according to language, society, or culture. If scientific names were used in all cases, the complexity

regarding names in the mind would be greatly reduced. Therefore, there is not much importance in debating or liking/disliking names. What is more important is to realize what the philosophy says or teaches. As it is said:

"Do you dispute with me concerning names which you have named, you and your fathers?" (Al-Quran 7:71)

Among all sciences, the supreme science is metaphysics or spiritual science. In fact, if a person tries to understand things correctly, they will realize that the subject of knowledge is essentially one: to understand the entire universe or to know the creation and the original source of creation—that is, to know God. That knowledge is spiritual science or transcendental knowledge. All other sciences are branches and sub-branches of spiritual science.

There are various branches of knowledge, but all are essentially engaged in the search for God. Spiritual science is the knowledge related to God. In the real world, no matter how much research or work humans do, it all revolves around God. Nothing exists outside of God. We advance on the path of knowing Him little by little in different ways and through different paths. These appear as various branches of science. Spiritual knowledge is the root of all sciences, thus it is the best. Spiritual science is the knowledge of Brahman or the soul (Atma).

The 'conclusive truth' or final decision among all arguments of logicians belongs to God. As it is said:

"The decision is only for Allah. He relates the truth, and He is the best of deciders." (Al-Quran 6:57)

Verse 10.33 Of letters I am the letter A, and among compound word forms I am the dual compound. I am also inexhaustible time, and of creators I am Brahma.

(Commentary 10.33) In Sanskrit or Vedic literature, the first letter is 'A.' No word can be pronounced without the 'A' sound. It marks the beginning of speech; thus, it is the best. In a dual compound (Dvandva-Samasa), both parts retain their importance, making it the superior form.

Among destroyers, time (Kala) is the greatest. Everything is destroyed by the influence of time. In the course of time, the entire creation will be destroyed in a great dissolution (Mahapralaya). As it is said:

"The Striking Hour! What is the Striking Hour? And what can make you know what is the Striking Hour? It is the Day when mankind will be like moths, scattered, and the mountains will be like wool, fluffed up." (Al-Quran 101:1-5)

God is the all-seeing witness. He knows everything about everyone. He is the one who gives the fruits of actions.

As it is said:

"And, [O Muhammad], you are not [engaged] in any matter... but We are witness over you when you are involved in it." (Al-Quran 10:61)

"Every soul will taste death, and you will only be given your [full] compensation on the Day of Resurrection." (Al-Quran 3:185)

"And for all are degrees from what they have done, and that He may fully compensate them for their deeds, and they will not be wronged." (Al-Quran 46:19)

Verse 10.34 I am all-devouring death, and I am the generating principle of all that is yet to be. Among women I am fame, fortune, fine speech, memory, intelligence, steadfastness and patience.

(Commentary 10.34) Among all destroyers, God is the all-devouring death. There is no greater theft than death. Therefore, He is Hari (the one who takes away). Again, among things yet to be, He is the origin. He creates, and He also causes destruction and death. As it is said:

"He it is who gives life and causes death." (Al-Quran 40:68)

Among women, God is fame, beauty, sweet speech, memory, intelligence, patience, and forgiveness. Firstly,

there are some differences in the structural characteristics of men and women. Everyone needs all qualities, and they exist in everyone. However, due to structural differences, certain qualities are more prominent in some. In the case of the mentioned qualities, women are enriched or superior. Therefore, among women, He is the bearer of these qualities.

Furthermore, through these qualities, a woman can control even an uncontrolled man. For the protection of society and creation, these qualities are necessary for women. It is important for women to acquire these qualities. Not only that, one must also know how to apply them wisely or through knowledge. That importance is also highlighted here.

Verse 10.35 Of the hymns in the Sama Veda I am the Brihat-sama, and of poetry I am the Gayatri. Of months I am Margashirsha [November-December], and of seasons I am flower-bearing spring.

(Commentary 10.35) The Sama Veda is enriched with beautiful music sung by various deities. Each of these songs is called Brihat-sama, which possesses exquisite melody and is traditionally sung at midnight.

Among the well-structured poems in the Sanskrit language, the Gayatri mantra is the best, traditionally

chanted by qualified Brahmins. God can be realized through the Gayatri mantra; thus, it is a symbol of God. The Gayatri mantra is particularly applicable to spiritually advanced individuals. If one achieves perfection in this mantra, they can enter the abode of God. To chant the Gayatri mantra, one must be situated in the mode of goodness (Sattva-guna) of material nature. It is considered a sound incarnation of Brahman. Brahma is its progenitor. In Vedic civilization, the Gayatri mantra is extremely important.

Among all months, Agrahayana (Margashirsha) is considered the best because, in India, crops are harvested during this time. Spring is the best season; everyone likes it. It is temperate and adorned with flowers and fruits. It is considered the King of Seasons. Excellence is applicable only to God; it is His symbol.

Verse 10.36 I am also the gambling of cheats, and of the splendid I am the splendor. I am victory, I am adventure, and I am the strength of the strong.

(Commentary 10.36) "I am also the gambling of cheats"—this means that in the case of trickery, deception, or the formulation of any strategy, God is supreme. Humans want to establish dominance in this material world. Therefore, they want to play various games starting from conspiracies. It is said that all this is

in vain. There is no need for these. These will never be successful. Only what God wills will happen. For humans to abandon these and surrender to Him is the best, wisest, and most intelligent behavior. As it is said:

"But Allah is the best of planners." (Al-Quran 8:30)

The strength, splendor, or enthusiasm and inspiration within the splendid also have their source in God. In fact, God is everything, and He is the best in everything.

Verse 10.37 Of the descendants of Vrishni I am Vasudeva, and of the Pandavas I am Arjuna. Of the sages I am Vyasa, and among great thinkers I am Ushana.

(Commentary 10.37) Among the Vrishni dynasty, Vasudeva (Krishna) is the best, and among the Pandavas, Arjuna is the best. Sri Krishna is the son of Vasudeva. Among sages or scholars expert in Vedic knowledge, Sri Vyasadeva is the best. He explained the Vedas in various ways. Among poets or thinkers—those with subtle vision—the preceptor of the demons, Ushana (Shukracharya), is the best. He was extremely intelligent and a far-sighted politician. God is within all excellence.

Verse 10.38 Among all means of suppressing lawlessness I am punishment, and of those who seek victory I am morality. Of secret things I am silence, and of the wise I am the wisdom.

(Commentary 10.38) In the administration or governance of a state, punishment is one of the most important matters, or rather, the primary tool. In this regard, it is the best method. As it is said:

"And for them are maces [or rods] of iron." (Al-Quran 22:21)

Whatever is best among the primary tools of rulers is also God. He keeps everything within order in His own way.

For those who seek victory, the best way is to adopt morality or ethics. Therefore, He is also that morality which helps them to be victorious.

If silence is maintained, nothing is revealed. Therefore, in secrecy, this is the best method. God is within all excellence. He is supreme. There is no one above Him, nothing above Him. The reason for the excellence of the wise is their wisdom. Therefore, among the wise, He is wisdom.

Verse 10.39 Furthermore, O Arjuna, I am the generating seed of all existences. There is no being—moving or unmoving—that can exist without Me.

(Commentary 10.39) There is a cause for everything. That cause or the seed of manifestation is God Himself. Without Him, no entity or existence can be, or can exist.

Everything takes shelter in Him. It survives by His power. Nothing can exist without God. He is Almighty.

What exists without His power is called 'Maya'—meaning 'that which is not.' Therefore, it is said: I am the seed of all that exists. Without Me, nothing moving or unmoving can have existence. As it is said:

"Have you seen that which you emit? Is it you who creates it, or are We the Creator? ... And have you seen that [seed] which you sow? Is it you who makes it grow, or are We the grower?" (Al-Quran 56:58-64)

God is the seed of everything. Everything is created from Him. He is the cause of all causes.

Verse 10.40 O mighty conqueror of enemies, there is no end to My divine opulences. What I have spoken to you is but a mere indication of My infinite glories.

(Commentary 10.40) There is no end to God's heavenly manifestations. What has been said here is only a small indicator of limitless abundance. In fact, whatever we see or however much we see in this world is all a manifestation of some opulence of His. There is no end to His greatness. There are no boundaries. He can do whatever He wills. However He manifests Himself. As it is said:

"[All] praise is [due] to Allah, Creator of the heavens and the earth... He increases in creation what He wills. Indeed, Allah is over all things competent." (Al-Quran 35:1)

Verse 10.41 Know that all opulent, beautiful and glorious creations spring from but a spark of My splendor.

(Commentary 10.41) All beauty, opulence, and great creations emerge from just a touch of God's heavenly radiance. He or His manifestation is within all excellence. His attributes, opulence, or Vibhuti are expressed in His names. Thus it is said:

"To Him belong the best names." (Al-Quran 17:110)

Verse 10.42 But what need is there, Arjuna, for all this detailed knowledge? With a single fragment of Myself I pervade and support this entire universe.

(Commentary 10.42) Whatever we see of the universe manifested in our knowledge is also a very tiny part of God. But many cannot conceive of these matters. Again, many do not believe the words of the scriptures. But when the same thing is said by science with scientific names, or in English as 'Dark Matter,' or with some Latin name, then many become overwhelmed after knowing those things and seeing presented pictures and videos. In fact, many do not know that the scriptures are the pathfinders and sources of inspiration even for science.

God says: I pervade the entire universe with a very tiny part. The universe of our conception is also very, very tiny. The Supreme Living Entity, God, is beyond the conception of vastness. He is with everything; everything exists and has entity by taking shelter in Him. As it is said:

"They have not appraised Allah with true appraisal, while the earth entirely will be [within] His grip on the Day of Resurrection, and the heavens will be folded in His right hand. Exalted is He!" (Al-Quran 39:67)

The Supreme Lord God is maintaining everyone. From the greatest being, Brahma, down to a tiny ant, He resides within everyone. His presence is everywhere in the living and the material! There is no one greater than Him. Therefore, no one else but Him should be worshipped. As it is said:

"So exalted is Allah, the Sovereign, the Truth; there is no deity except Him, Lord of the Noble Throne." (Al-Quran 23:116)

Even the great gods like Brahma and Shiva are only a tiny part of Him. If someone considers God to be only Brahma, Shiva, Durga, Kali, or any of the gods/goddesses, then they are on a mistaken path. The Supreme Lord God is present everywhere in this material world, having entered every living entity as the Paramatma (Supersoul). He is all-pervading through the expansion of the

Paramatma residing in all beings as His partial manifestation.

But what is the need for all this detailed knowledge? The meaning of this statement is that for an ordinary person, there is no great need to know so much. Even if one knows these things, the "smallness of the small" will not be removed. Even if one does not know, it is the same.

What is important is to perform one's duty toward Him with faith and devotion. To surrender oneself and one's will to His will and guidance. To save something beautiful for the future.

Marvelous Gita by A Z M Alamgir

Chapter 11: The Vision of the Universal Form

(Total Verses: 55)

Summary: When one properly realizes the greatness of God, they become aware of God's vastness and their own insignificance. Only then does one voluntarily become humble and submissive. Devotion to Him grows, and gradually, a deep faith develops within the heart. Recognizing one's own helplessness, one becomes dependent on Him.

As in previous chapters, this chapter highlights the opulence and majesty of God. A concept of God's Universal Form (Vishwarupa) is provided, in which everything in the universe is situated. In that Universal

Form, everything is utterly wonderful, radiant, all-pervading, and infinite!

It is not possible to see this form of God through mere scholarship or ritual worship. By what means, then, can one enter that world of His? This chapter addresses that subject.

Verses and Commentary

Verse 11.1 Arjuna said: Out of compassion for me, You have spoken these most confidential spiritual matters; by hearing them, my delusion and confusion have been dispelled.

Verse 11.2 O lotus-eyed one! I have heard from You in detail about the appearance and disappearance of all living beings and about Your inexhaustible greatness.

Verse 11.3 O Supreme Lord! You are exactly as You have described Yourself. O Greatest of Beings! I desire to see Your divine, sovereign form.

Verse 11.4 O Lord! If You think that I am capable of seeing that form, O Lord of Yoga! Then please show me Your immutable, eternal self.

(Commentary 11.1-4) Upon hearing Sri Krishna's most

confidential spiritual discussions, Arjuna's delusion and confusion are removed. He comes to know that the appearance and disappearance of every living being occur from God. God's greatness is endless. God alone directs everything; "I" or "We" are merely instruments. By knowing this, Arjuna's sense of "I-ness" (ego) is dispelled.

Whatever Sri Krishna has said is entirely true. God supports the entire universe with a very tiny fragment of Himself. He exists in an unmanifested form, and He also exists in a manifested form. Arjuna accepts all of Sri Krishna's words with a believing heart. Subsequently, he expresses a desire to see God's imperishable, divine form. Sri Krishna says:

Verse 11.5 The Blessed Lord said: O Partha! Behold My hundreds and thousands of diverse divine forms, of many colors and shapes!

Verse 11.6 O Bharata! Behold the Adityas, the Vasus, the Rudras, the Ashwini-kumaras, and the Maruts—behold many wonders that no one has ever seen before.

Verse 11.7 Behold here today, O Gudakesha, the entire universe with all its moving and non-moving entities, all gathered together in this body of Mine, and whatever else you wish to see.

Verse 11.8 But you will not be able to see Me with your

own eyes. I grant you divine vision. Behold My sovereign, creative power!

Verse 11.9 Sanjaya said: O King! Having spoken thus, the great Lord of Yoga, Hari, showed Partha His supreme, sovereign form.

(Commentary 11.5-9) In response to Arjuna's desire, Sri Krishna asks him to behold His hundreds and thousands of diverse divine forms of various colors and shapes. There, the original beings—the Adityas, Vasus, Rudras, Ashwini-kumaras, and Maruts—are all present. He tells Arjuna to look at these wonderful forms which he has never seen before. He tells him to see whatever else he wishes, including the past, present, and even the future. Everything, moving and non-moving, exists within this body. The entire world is gathered together inside the body of God.

It is not possible to see that form of God with Arjuna's physical eyes or current vision. Therefore, He grants him divine vision (divya-chakshu). Then, He tells Arjuna to behold His opulent, inconceivable form. Sanjaya tells Dhritarashtra that, having spoken thus, the Great Lord of Yoga, Sri Krishna, caused Partha to behold the opulence of His supreme form.

These concepts undoubtedly inspire science to gain

ideas about cosmic matters and, at the same time, show the way. There are many possibilities for mankind in the great universe and outer space. Those messages have been given beforehand. It has also been stated with hope that these are visible through divine vision. Humans have been asked to search for the means. As it is said:

"And in the heaven is your provision and whatever you are promised. Then by the Lord of the heaven and earth, indeed, it is truth—just as [it is truth] that you are speaking." (Al-Quran 51:22-23)

Verse 11.10-11 That Universal Form possessed many mouths and eyes, many wonderful sights, many divine ornaments, and many divine weapons raised. It wore divine garlands and garments and was anointed with divine fragrances. Everything was wonderful, radiant, infinite, and all-pervading!

Verse 11.12 If a thousand suns were to rise simultaneously in the sky, their brilliance might resemble the radiance of that form.

Verse 11.13 At that time, Arjuna could see the entire universe, divided into many parts, situated in one place within the body of the Supreme Lord.

(Commentary 11.10-13) What Arjuna saw was indescribable. Nevertheless, Sanjaya describes to

Dhritarashtra as much as can be expressed through language.

Within the body of God, Arjuna saw thousands of planetary worlds. That form had countless facial features, countless eyes, many wonderful sights, countless divine ornaments, and divine weapons. It was adorned with divine garlands and clothes and anointed with divine scents. Everything was wonderful, infinite, radiant, and all-pervading!

If a thousand suns were to rise together in the sky, that brilliance might be somewhat comparable to that form. At this time, Arjuna saw the entire universe, divided into many parts, present all at once within the body of the Supreme Lord. As it is said:

"Have those who disbelieved not considered that the heavens and the earth were a joined entity, and We separated them?" (Al-Quran 21:30)

"And the heaven We constructed with strength, and indeed, We are [its] expander. And the earth We have spread out, and how excellent is the preparer!" (Al-Quran 51:47-48)

According to Vedic scriptures, there are infinite universes containing countless planets and stars. Some are made of earth, some of gold, some of gems and jewels; some

are massive, some tiny, or medium-sized. As it is said:

"Race toward forgiveness from your Lord and a Garden whose width is like the width of the heavens and earth, prepared for those who believed in Allah and His messengers." (Al-Quran 57:21)

Reader, to understand the discussion of God's Universal Form, one must also try to realize these matters in the light of one's own body. As stated in the Bible, God created man in His own image. Whatever is seen in the Universal Form is also present in this body as a counterpart. Therefore, one must try to know God through oneself and oneself through God. In other words, one must try to know the inner by looking at the outer and the outer by looking at the inner. These matters can be understood at three levels. As it is said:

"It is Allah who has created seven heavens and of the earth, the like of them. [His] command descends among them so you may know that Allah is over all things competent..." (Al-Quran 65:12)

In this context, let us discuss some relevant points. Bacteria, viruses, or any other tiny or single-celled organisms also have life. They are so small that they cannot be seen with the naked eye. But they can be seen with "divine vision," just as they are seen through a

microscope.

How tiny is a virus compared to the human body! Or how many times larger is a human body compared to a virus! That virus also makes its home in the human body. It has no idea about the complete form of the nature in which it lives. Billions of cells are scattered there like universes. Each cell is protected by a tough covering or membrane. Traveling from one place to another is almost impossible. Yet, that virus or bacteria successfully moves from one cell to another. In our knowledge, its spread happens quickly or in just a few days. But in its knowledge, it might be thousands of days. We do not know if it has any knowledge of the complete human body. The body or nature in which it builds its home is the provider of its life's necessities.

The place or nature in which we live is also the interior of a body. But we have no complete idea about it. It is so vast! Billions of planets and stars are there. Traveling from one place to another is almost impossible; it is millions of light-years away. One has to penetrate membranes or gravitational forces. Does a virus face similar problems when moving from one of our cells to another? How tiny is this Earth compared to the universe! How tiny is a human being compared to the Earth!

Compared to the whole body, how tiny is that single cell

which a virus enters! It cannot be seen with the naked eye. There, the virus is even tinier! Billions of viruses are newly produced there. There, it establishes its world. How big is the body compared to it! Just as the universe is to us. Who is maintaining us?

Verse 11.14 Then Arjuna, filled with wonder and his hair standing on end, bowed his head and, joining his palms, offered obeisances to the Supreme Lord and said—

Verse 11.15 Arjuna said: O Lord! I see all the gods in Your body. I see all moving and non-moving entities. I see the creator Brahma seated on the lotus. I see the great sages and divine serpents.

Verse 11.16 O Lord of the Universe! I see in Your Universal Form countless arms, bellies, mouths, and eyes. I see Your infinite form everywhere, and I see no beginning, middle, or end of You, O Universal Form!

Verse 11.17 I see You everywhere, adorned with crowns, maces, and discs, a mass of radiance shining everywhere, difficult to behold, blazing like burning fire and the sun, immeasurable in brilliance.

(Commentary 11.14-17) Upon seeing the Universal Form, Arjuna is filled with wonder. With deep reverence, he bows his head, joins his hands, offers obeisances to God, and speaks the words above. As it is said:

"Moses said, 'My Lord, show [Yourself] to me that I may look at You.' [Allah] said, 'You will not see Me, but look at the mountain; if it should remain in its place, then you will see Me.'

But when his Lord appeared to the mountain, He rendered it as dust, and Moses fell unconscious. And when he awoke, he said, 'Exalted are You! I have repented to You, and I am the first of the believers.'" (Al-Quran 7:143)

Sitting in one place, Arjuna beholds everything in the universe. In the Universal Form, he sees countless arms, bellies, mouths, and eyes. His form is infinite everywhere, having no beginning, middle, or end. In the divine body, he sees all the gods. Shining rays of light were everywhere, which were difficult to look at. Everything was immeasurably brilliant like blazing fire and the sun. As it is said:

"The heart did not lie [about] what it saw. So will you dispute with him over what he saw? And he certainly saw him in another descent, at the Lote Tree of the Utmost Boundary—near it is the Garden of Refuge—when there covered the Lote Tree that which covered [it]. The sight did not swerve, nor did it transgress [its limit]. He certainly saw of the greatest signs of his Lord." (Al-Quran 53:11-18)

Verse 11.18 Arjuna said: You are the Imperishable, the supreme object of knowledge. You are the ultimate refuge of this universe; You are inexhaustible; You are the protector of the eternal religion and truth and justice; You are the eternal living Being—this is my opinion.

Verse 11.19 You are without beginning, middle, or end; You are of infinite prowess and possessed of countless arms. The moon and the sun are Your eyes. I see You with a mouth like blazing fire, heating the entire universe by Your own radiance.

Verse 11.20 You are one. You alone pervade the heaven, the earth, and the space between them in all directions. O Great One! Seeing this wonderful and terrible, fierce form of Yours, the three worlds are bewildered and disturbed!

Verse 11.21 All those hosts of gods are entering into You. Some, out of fear, are praising Your glory with joined palms. The great sages and perfected beings are extolling You with hymns, chanting "Peace!" and Vedic mantras.

Verse 11.22 The Rudras, Adityas, Vasus, Sadhyas, Vishvadevas, Ashwini-kumaras, Maruts, ancestors, Gandharvas, Yakshas, Asuras, and perfected beings—all are beholding You in amazement.

Verse 11.23 O Mighty-armed! Seeing Your manifold mouths and eyes, Your manifold arms, thighs, and feet, Your manifold bellies and Your many terrible teeth, the planetary systems are disturbed and terrified, and so am I.

Verse 11.24 O Vishnu! Seeing Your sky-touching, glowing form of many colors, with gaping mouths and large shining eyes, my inner soul is pained and disturbed. I can no longer maintain my courage or tranquility.

Verse 11.25 Seeing Your mouths, terrible with teeth and blazing like the fire of dissolution, I lose my sense of direction and find no peace. O Lord of lords! O Refuge of the worlds! Please be gracious.

(Commentary 11.18-25) Upon seeing God's Universal Form, Arjuna is overwhelmed with amazement. Swept away by emotion, he acknowledges: You are the Imperishable; You are the supreme goal; You are the ultimate refuge of the universe, inexhaustible, the protector of eternal religion, truth, and justice, the eternal living Being. This is my opinion.

I have seen Your infinite form everywhere. It has no end, no middle, and no beginning. I have seen You, radiant and possessing all-pervading brilliance. You have heated the entire universe with Your own splendor.

The moon and the sun are Your eyes. I have seen You with a mouth like blazing fire. The gods and perfected beings, being fearful, are praising Your glory with joined hands. They are extolling You with hymns, chanting words of peace and Vedic mantras. As it is said:

"The heavens almost break from above them, and the angels exalt [Allah] with praise of their Lord and ask forgiveness for those on earth." (Al-Quran 42:5)

It is noteworthy that the scriptures mention twelve Adityas (12), eight Vasus (8), eleven Rudras (11), plus Indra (1) and Prajapati (1)—totaling thirty-three (33) gods.

Seeing the terrible and wonderful form of God, the three worlds are bewildered! Similarly, Arjuna is also afraid. Seeing this form, he finds no comfort. He cannot maintain patience and peace in his mind. With joined hands, he pleads: Please be gracious!

Arjuna says:

Verse 11.26-27 All the kings, along with the sons of Dhritarashtra and their allied hosts, and Bhishma, Drona, Karna, and our chief warriors as well, are rushing into Your fearful mouths with terrible teeth. Some are seen with their heads crushed between Your teeth.

Verse 11.28 As the many water currents of rivers flow

toward the ocean, so these great warriors of the world of men are entering Your blazing mouths.

Verse 11.29 As moths rush with great speed into a blazing fire to perish, so do all these people rush with great speed into Your mouths.

Verse 11.30 O Vishnu! You are licking up all the people from all sides with Your flaming mouths and devouring them. You are scorching the entire universe with Your powerful, radiant rays.

Verse 11.31 O Fierce Form! Tell me who You are. I offer my obeisances to You. O Lord of lords! Please be gracious. O Original Living Being! I wish to know You, for I do not understand Your activity and Your purpose.

(Commentary 11.26-31) Arjuna sees all the kings present at Kurukshetra and the chief warriors of both sides rushing into God's fearful mouths with terrible teeth. The heads of some have already been crushed and are stuck between the teeth. Just as river currents enter the ocean, so the warriors of the human world are rushing into God's blazing mouths.

Just as moths rush toward a blazing fire in a deathly obsession, so all these people are rushing into the mouths with great speed. God is licking and devouring the people from all sides with His blazing mouths and

scorching the entire world with powerful radiant rays.

In this context, let us mention some relevant points. In this same way, food enters the mouths of living beings and is crushed. Then each particle travels a long path. On the way, beings spend their time or life in joy and sorrow. At one point, they enter the "fire" (digestion) with great speed. When processed there, a "black hole" (assimilation) absorbs everything necessary. The essence reaches different "worlds" (parts of the body). The entire world known as the body is heated. It is said:

"And on the earth are signs for the certain [in faith]. And in yourselves. Then will you not see?" (Al-Quran 51:20-21)

Arjuna is bewildered by seeing the Universal Form of God. He says, O Fierce Form! Who are You? Tell me. What is Your goal and purpose? Sri Krishna says:

Verse 11.32 The Blessed Lord said: I am Time, the great destroyer of worlds; I am engaged here in annihilating the people. Even without you, none of the warriors arrayed here in the opposing armies shall remain.

Verse 11.33 Therefore, stand up! Win glory! Conquer your enemies and enjoy a prosperous kingdom. These warriors have already been slain by Me. O Savyasachin (Arjuna)! Be merely an instrument.

Verse 11.34 I have already slain Drona, Bhishma, Jayadratha, Karna, and other brave warriors! You simply kill them! Do not be distressed or disturbed. You will conquer your enemies in battle! Fight!

(Commentary 11.32-34) The Lord says: I am Time (Kala); I am the destroyer of the earth. I am engaged here in destroying the people. Even without you, none of the warriors present here in the opposing ranks will remain alive. All shall be destroyed.

God is Time. Everything is in the hands of time. Along with time, everything moves toward its destiny. Everyone receives what they deserve. Time consumes everything, destroys everything, and also provides the solution. Even if Arjuna does not fight, everyone present at Kurukshetra will be destroyed in some way. Even this world will be destroyed. No one can save anything from the hand of time. He has arranged the laws of nature in that way. Everything is accomplished by His will and plan. Hints of this can be found elsewhere:

"If Allah had willed, He could have taken vengeance upon them [Himself], but [He ordered armed struggle] to test some of you by means of others." (Al-Quran 47:4)

"Even if you had been inside your houses, those for whom death was written would have gone forth to their resting

places." (Al-Quran 3:154)

"He has ordained for each of you a term, and a specified term is with Him..." (Al-Quran 6:2)

God tells Arjuna to stand up with a firm heart. He says: Attain glory in the world. Conquer your enemies. Enjoy a prosperous kingdom. All of these have already been slain by Me. I have already killed Drona, Bhishma, Jayadratha, Karna, and other brave warriors! You just slay them!

It is worth noting that in the royal assembly, in front of everyone, the clothes of Draupadi, the wife of the five Pandavas, were snatched away. Despite such a great sin and injustice taking place, elders like Bhishma and Dronacharya played the role of silent spectators. Because of receiving petty financial support from Duryodhana, they had sold their souls and become spineless.

Those who supported Duryodhana's unjust behavior were also guilty of the same error and sin. Sri Krishna had already entered that message into their hearts. He had already crushed and destroyed their morale. Yet, morale is one of the primary weapons for winning a war. They are now dead. Winning the war is no longer possible for them. They have already been defeated in battle. Now it is merely their turn to be physically slain.

Sri Krishna tells Arjuna: You are merely an instrument. What was to be done, I have already done. All the great warriors have already been slain by Me. You just fight. Slay them. Victory in battle belongs to you.

The outcome of the war has already been determined. Sri Krishna could understand that. God is all-wise! He knows the past, present, and future. That is why He speaks this way. As it is said:

"[Remember] when you asked help of your Lord, and He answered you, 'Indeed, I will reinforce you with a thousand from the angels, following one another.' And Allah made it not but good tidings and so that your hearts would be assured thereby. And victory is not but from Allah. Indeed, Allah is Exalted in Might and Wise." (Al-Quran 8:9-10)

Everything is directed by God's plan. Victory comes from the side of God who is seated within the heart. He is all-wise. One who submits to God and works according to His will and plan is truly intelligent. All tasks of creation and destruction in the world are accomplished through God's flawless planning. What, then, is the actual work of a living being in this world?

The work of the living being is to work as an assistant to God. It is to participate in the management of creation in

the way He desires. One who works according to God's will, even sacrificing their life, is rewarded by God. In fact, that is what a living being should do. Through this, souls get the opportunity to return to God. Therefore, it is said:

"Fight in the way of Allah—that is, in the way of truth, justice, and welfare." (Al-Quran 2:190)

Verse 11.35 Sanjaya said: Having heard these words of Keshava, Arjuna, with joined palms and a trembling voice, offered obeisances to Sri Krishna with a fearful heart and spoke again—

Verse 11.36 Arjuna said: O Hrishikesha! By chanting the glories of Your name and attributes, this earth rejoices and becomes attached to You. The Rakshasas (demons) and those who follow the path of untruth flee in all directions out of fear, and all the perfected beings and those who follow the right path offer You their respects. All this is as it should be.

Verse 11.37 O Great One! O Infinite! O God of gods! O Refuge of the universe! You are greater than and prior to even Brahma. Why should everyone not offer You their respects? You are the Imperishable, the Supreme Brahman, who is beyond both the temporary and the eternal.

Verse 11.38 O Infinite Form! You are the original God, the

primordial Being. You are the ultimate refuge of this universe. You are the knower and the object of knowledge. You pervade this entire universe!

Verse 11.39 You are Wind, Death, Fire, Water, and the Moon. You are Prajapati (Brahma, the grandfather) and the Great-grandfather (the progenitor of Brahma). I offer my obeisances to You a thousand times. I bow to You again and again. I bow to You repeatedly!

Verse 11.40 I offer my obeisances to You from the front. I offer my obeisances to You from behind. O All-in-all! I bow to You from every side. O Infinite Prowess! You possess immeasurable strength! You pervade the entire universe. Therefore, You are everything!

Verse 11.41-42 Thinking of You as a friend and being ignorant of Your true glory, out of madness or out of love, whatever I have said—such as "O Krishna," "O Yadava," "O Friend"—and whatever disrespect I have shown You in jest while resting, lying down, eating, or sitting, whether alone or in the presence of others—O Achyuta (Infallible One)! Please forgive me for all of it.

Verse 11.43 O Lord of incomparable power! You are the Father of this entire moving and non-moving world, the worshipable one, the Teacher, and the greatest of teachers. There is no one equal to You in the three worlds.

How then could there be anyone greater?

Verse 11.44 Therefore, bowing down and prostrating my body, I crave Your grace. As a father toward his son, as a friend toward a friend, as a lover toward his beloved—O Lord! Please forgive my offenses in the same way.

Verse 11.45 O Lord! I am delighted to have seen this form never seen before, yet my heart is also distressed with fear. O God of gods! O Refuge of the universe! Please show me Your previous form. Please be gracious!

Verse 11.46 I wish to see You as before, wearing a crown and holding a mace and a disc in Your hands. O Thousand-armed One! O Universal Form! Please manifest Yourself in that four-armed form!

(Commentary 11.35-46) Upon seeing the Universal Form of God, Arjuna is struck with wonder. While bowing down, he says in a fearful voice: O Lord, by the chanting of Your names and attributes, this earth is becoming joyful. Everyone is becoming attached to You. Those who follow the path of untruth are fleeing in all directions out of fear, and those who follow the right path are showing You proper respect. All this is happening as it should.

Arjuna says: Why should everyone not show You respect? You are prior even to Brahma. You are the doer of everything. You are the God of gods, the refuge of the

universe! You are the Imperishable. You are beyond or above cause and effect.

You are God. You are the original, eternal Being. You are the supreme refuge of the world. You are the knower and the object of knowledge. This entire universe is pervaded by You!

In this world, You are everything! You are the Wind; You are Death; You are Fire; You are Water; You are the Moon; You are Prajapati Brahma, and You are the Great-grandfather. There is no one equal to You.

Not knowing Your true glory, thinking of You as a friend, out of ignorance or out of love, whatever I have said previously like "O Krishna," "O Yadava," "O Friend," or whatever disrespect I have shown in jest—please forgive me.

I am delighted to see this Universal Form never seen before. At the same time, my mind is disturbed by fear. Please be gracious and show me Your previous divine form.

I wish to see You as before, wearing a crown and holding a mace and disc in Your hands—possessing four arms. Arjuna expresses his desire to see God in the four-armed form instead of the terrible Universal Form.

It is worth noting that God's Universal Form is material and temporary, like this world. But His divine form in Vaikunthaloka is the four-armed Narayana form.

There are countless planets in the sky. In each planet, God exists under different names. Arjuna wants to see one of God's forms from Vaikunthaloka.

In every Vaikuntha planet, God's Narayana form is four-armed. That is, He has four arms or hands. In those four hands, He holds the symbolic signs of the Shankha (conch), Chakra (disc), Gada (mace), and Padma (lotus) in various combinations. Depending on which hand He holds these four symbols, Narayana is known by different names. These are all identical forms of God. Sri Krishna says:

Verse 11.47 The Blessed Lord said: O Arjuna! Being pleased with you, I have shown you by My own creative power this radiant, primordial, infinite Universal Form, which no one but you has ever seen before.

Verse 11.48 O Chief of the Kurus! Neither by study of the Vedas, nor by performing sacrifices, nor by charity, nor by pious acts, nor by severe penances can anyone else in the world of men see this form that you have seen.

Verse 11.49 Do not be distressed or bewildered by seeing this terrible form of Mine. Being free from fear and

with a cheerful heart, behold again that previous form of Mine.

(Commentary 11.47-49) Arjuna is extremely dear to Sri Krishna. Therefore, being pleased with him, He has shown him His radiant Universal Form that pervades the whole world and has no beginning or end—a form which no one but Arjuna has ever seen before.

The unimaginable form of God that Arjuna has seen cannot be seen by gaining Vedic knowledge, nor by performing sacrifices, nor by giving charity, nor by pious acts, nor by severe penances. It is only possible to see it if God Himself is pleased with someone and wishes to show it. He only displays this form to His devotee.

Arjuna is disturbed by seeing the terrible Universal Form of God. He wishes to see Him in the four-armed gentle form. Sri Krishna tells Arjuna: Being free from all fear and with a cheerful heart, behold the form you have wished to see. Sanjaya tells Dhritarashtra:

Verse 11.50 Sanjaya said: Having spoken thus to Arjuna, Vasudeva showed His own form. The Great Soul, having again assumed a pleasant form, comforted the terrified Arjuna.

Verse 11.51 Arjuna said: O Janardana! Seeing this gentle and beautiful human-like form of Yours, I have now

become composed and restored to my normal self.

(Commentary 11.50-51) Sanjaya tells Dhritarashtra: Then Vasudeva's son Sri Krishna showed Arjuna the form he wished to see. By assuming a gentle form, He comforted the disturbed Arjuna. By seeing the gentle and beautiful human-like form, Arjuna becomes normal and composed. Sri Krishna says:

Verse 11.52 The Blessed Lord said: This form of Mine which you have seen is very difficult to behold; even the gods are always longing to see this form.

Verse 11.53 The form you have seen of Mine cannot be seen by anyone through the Vedas, nor by penance, nor by charity, nor by sacrifice.

Verse 11.54 O Parantapa! O Arjuna! Only through undivided devotion can I be known as I am, seen in truth, and entered into My world.

Verse 11.55 O son of Pandu! He who performs his duties by surrendering to Me, who makes Me his goal, who is My exclusive devotee, free from attachment and free from enmity toward all beings—he shall certainly reach Me.

(Commentary 11.52-55) Even the gods long to see the rare form of God that Arjuna has seen. But only Arjuna was fortunate enough to see that form because God

Himself showed it to him.

Seeing the Universal Form of God is not an easy matter unless God Himself bestows grace upon someone. Even by Vedic study, penance, charity, or ritual worship, it is not possible to see that form. These are not the paths by which one can see God as He is, or enter into His world. Only through undivided devotion (ananya-bhakti) can one know, understand, and see God in truth. Subsequently, one can enter into His world.

To attain God, one must surrender to Him. All actions must be performed for His sake. One must move according to His will and instructions. One must live life immersed in His thought with a devotional heart. Those who are exclusively His devotees and followers, and for that reason have been able to renounce all worldly attachments or attractions and have become free from enmity toward all beings—such a devotee attains God.

Marvelous Gita by AZM Alamgir

Chapter 12: Bhakti Yoga

(The Yoga of Devotion)

(Total Verses: 20)

Summary: The ultimate goal of life is to become free from the painful bondage of the material world and achieve a life of supreme happiness and infinite bliss. God is the destination of that supreme happiness shown by religion. He is the goal. Therefore, one must practice the discipline to attain God.

To attain God, one must be liberated from the cycle of birth and death. This chapter describes how one can become dear to God and reach Him. Therefore, not through renunciation of action, but through action performed to become dear to Him, should one strive to

attain Him. That path is demonstrated here.

Verse 12.1 Arjuna said: Between those devotees who are always united with You and worship You (the personal form), and those who worship the Unmanifested, the Imperishable (the impersonal Brahman)—who among them is the superior seeker?

(Commentary 12.1) At the end of the previous chapter, Sri Krishna said that God as He is cannot be known through Vedic study, severe penance, charity, or ritual worship. It can only be achieved through undivided devotion (Ananya Bhakti). Only a devotee who always remembers Him with such devotion can enter the spiritual world of God. As it is said:

"...and surely the remembrance of Allah is greater." (Al-Quran 29:45)

Arjuna, therefore, asks Sri Krishna which way of focusing on God is best. There are two ways: one is to focus on His personal or specific form through meditation and worship, and the other is to meditate on the Impersonal, Unmanifested Brahman, which is beyond the senses and is called the Imperishable (Akshara).

Personalists (Savisheshavadis) worship by keeping a

specific form of God in mind. Impersonalists (Nirvisheshavadis), since they do not rely on a form or medium, can be said to rely on themselves or their own knowledge for worship. Arjuna wants to know who is the superior seeker between the worshiper of the Personal God (Saguna) and the worshiper of the Impersonal Brahman (Nirguna). Sri Krishna says:

Verse 12.2 The Blessed Lord said: Those who fix their minds on Me and always worship Me with supreme faith—in My opinion, they are the superior seekers.

Verse 12.3-4 But those who worship the Unmanifested, the Indefinable, the All-pervading, the Inconceivable, the Unchanging, the Immovable, the Imperishable or Impersonal Brahman—by restraining all senses, being even-minded toward everyone, and engaged in the welfare of all beings—they also attain Me.

Verse 12.5 But the difficulty of those whose minds are attached to the Unmanifested is greater; for the path of the Unmanifested is hard for embodied beings to reach.

(Commentary 12.2) Sri Krishna says that those who are always mentally connected with God and worship a specific form or deity with transcendental faith and a focused mind are the superior seekers. Thus, Sri Krishna considers the worship of the Personal or individual form

to be better.

(Commentary 12.3-4) In the following verses, He states that those who restrain all senses, are even-minded toward all, and are engaged in the welfare of all beings—worshiping the Unmanifested (beyond sensory perception), the All-pervading, the Inconceivable (that which cannot be imagined), and the Immovable or Unchanging (the Imperishable Impersonal Brahman)—they also reach God.

Those who do not worship the Personal form of God indirectly strive for the same goal through Impersonal worship. They also eventually reach God. This is the point emphasized here.

If one wishes to advance toward God, they must subdue their senses, be service-oriented toward all, and be dedicated to the welfare of all living creatures. When one realizes that the same Supreme Soul (Paramatma) resides everywhere and within everyone, enmity toward others disappears. Distinctions between high and low, or humans and animals, vanish. The realization dawns that the same Soul exists everywhere. The external covering loses its importance. Only then can a person truly serve everyone and work for the welfare of all beings.

Spiritualists who strive to know the Impersonal aspect of

God are called Impersonalists or Jnana Yogis. Those who serve the Personal form of God with devotion are called Personalists or Bhakti Yogis. However, both knowledge (Jnana) and devotion (Bhakti) are necessary for both paths.

(Commentary 12.5) For common people, it is easier to worship by keeping a specific form of God in mind. They first learn to feel devotion toward that form. Then, they worship by visualizing that form in their mental world.

For example: 1 stick + 1 stick = 2 sticks. By presenting physical sticks, it is easier to explain the concept of 1+1 = 2. This is how teaching is done at the primary level of gaining knowledge. But 1+1 = 2 can also be taught without presenting any physical objects. The answer or the goal remains the same.

The difference is that in one method, sticks are presented. In the other, no object is presented; the task is performed by understanding the concept through imagination. For those who have ascended to a higher level of knowledge, no physical object is required for understanding; they solve the issues mentally through imagination. However, for those at the primary level or those who find it difficult to grasp concepts that way, worshiping a Personal form is much more accessible. At a certain stage, this becomes a mental habit. Moving

away from it feels difficult even in the mental world, and then it cannot be abandoned.

For those accustomed to the Impersonal, however, it is not difficult. But generally, worshiping the Unmanifested is somewhat arduous. For embodied beings, realizing something Impersonal can feel particularly difficult at the initial stage. Even then, it is impossible to understand what someone is imagining or thinking in their mind. Of course, if one is accustomed to the Impersonal from the beginning, that too becomes easy over time. Sri Krishna says:

Verse 12.6-7 O Partha! For those who surrender all actions to Me, who are devoted to Me with undivided mind and meditate upon Me in worship—those whose minds are absorbed in Me, I swiftly deliver from the ocean of the death-bound world.

Verse 12.8 Fix your mind on Me alone and settle your intellect in Me. Thus, after death, you shall undoubtedly live in Me.

Verse 12.9 But if you are unable to fix your mind steadily on Me, then, O Dhananjaya! Seek to attain Me by the practice of yoga (Abhyasa-yoga).

Verse 12.10 If you are unable even to practice, then be intent on performing actions for Me. Even by performing

actions for My sake, you shall achieve perfection.

Verse 12.11 If you are unable to do even this, then taking refuge in the yoga of surrendering actions to Me, abandon the desire for the fruits of all actions with a self-controlled mind.

Verse 12.12 Knowledge is better than mere practice; meditation is better than knowledge; and renunciation of the fruits of action is better than meditation; for peace follows immediately from renunciation.

(Commentary 12.6-7) The Supreme Lord Himself delivers those He loves from all kinds of dangers and sufferings. Whom does He love? He loves His devotees. Who are His devotees?

A true devotee is one who believes in Him and places trust in Him. Because they trust Him, they do not consider any action as their own. They do not work for themselves. They surrender all actions to God. What does it mean to surrender all actions to God? It means that in whatever work they do, they believe that since He gave them life, the work belongs to Him. They perform all tasks thinking they are for Him. They do not even consider themselves the enjoyers of the results of that work. Therefore, they leave the results of their actions to the judgment of God. They simply perform their duties. Their thoughts operate

at such a mental height. There is no religion higher than surrender. Surrender is the expression of ultimate devotion and trust. As it is said:

"Your God is one God, so to Him submit..." (Al-Quran 22:34)

"Indeed, Allah loves those who rely [upon Him]." (Al-Quran 3:159)

A true devotee always remembers God in their heart. They do not forget Him even for a moment. Even amidst all work, they remain meditative upon Him. Therefore, with a concentrated mind, they worship Him. A special quality of a pure devotee is that they remember God constantly and unwaveringly without considering time or place. Similarly, God does not forget His pure devotee even for a second. Because of this undivided devotion, God becomes easily accessible to them. As it is said:

"And remember the name of your Lord and devote yourself to Him with a complete devotion." (Al-Quran 73:8)

"...and establish prayer for My remembrance." (Al-Quran 20:14)

God is merciful to all, but He is especially attached to His pure devotees. He helps such devotees in every way. He

grants them sufficient knowledge so that they may know Him completely and enter His abode. As it is said:

"So whoever Allah wants to guide - He expands his breast to [contain] Islam... And this is the path of your Lord, [leading] straight... For them will be the Home of Peace with their Lord." (Al-Quran 6:125-127)

He delivers them from the ocean of this world, which is characterized by birth and death. Only He can protect or deliver one from birth and death. As it is said:

"He gives life and causes death... and you have not besides Allah any protector or any helper." (Al-Quran 9:116)

The soul is also endowed with divine qualities. Therefore, a person can recognize, know, and understand God through themselves. Human nature is such that even if a person is very cruel or fierce, if someone truly and sincerely devotes themselves to them, their heart softens. They welcome them from the heart. The greatness of devotion is boundless! God can do anything for His devotee. For those He wishes to deliver, it is said:

"Except for those who repent, believe and do righteous work. For them Allah will replace their evil deeds with good." (Al-Quran 25:70)

The fruits of all religious paths can be attained through this devotion alone. This is the unique characteristic of devotion. Bhakti Yoga is simple and pure.

(Commentary 12.8) At the time of death, whatever state or thought one remembers, that state is attained. Therefore, one is told to always fix the mind, life, and intellect in God. One is urged to remember Him always in the heart. Even in the midst of all actions, one should remain focused on Him. If the thought of Him is always in the heart, then at the time of death, that same thought will prevail, and one will gain the opportunity to live within Him.

To tell the truth, one who is always meditative on God lives in peace within Him even in this world. The heart of such a person does not reside at the material-earthly level.

(Commentary 12.9) To attain God, one is told to be concentrated on Him. But if someone cannot do it all at once, several beautiful steps are mentioned to elevate one to that level gradually.

To focus the mind on God with a steady heart, it is suggested to build that habit slowly. This means withdrawing the mind from worldly desires and repeatedly fixing it on the thought or meditation of God.

This is why the term "Practice of Yoga" (Abhyasa-yoga) is used. Over time, this must be turned into a habit. One should practice whatever gives rise to devotion to God in the mind.

(Commentary 12.10) If one cannot build a habit through the rules mentioned above, they are told to work for God. By working with the thought of God, the habit of focusing on Him will develop, and perfection can be achieved. Therefore, one should work for the welfare of creation out of a sense of duty toward God.

(Commentary 12.11) If someone is unable to do even that, it is said to surrender all actions to God and, with a controlled mind, renounce the desire for the fruits of action. Then the goal will be achieved. This is selfless action (Nishkama Karma). In fact, greed or the desire to get something is what attracts humans most to the world. That is why humans work. These keep humans away from spiritual thoughts.

Therefore, one who renounces the fruits of action and performs work surrendered to God can make such a great sacrifice only because of the highest level of devotion toward God. Thus, if one can do only this one thing, the thought of God will arise within them.

(Commentary 12.12) By restraining the mind through

practice, the mind, life, and intellect can be focused on God. But this can also develop without understanding or proper knowledge. If devotion based on imagination grows, it might not be possible to truly know God. Therefore, it is said that knowledge is better than practice. It is better to engage in action after knowing God through the pursuit of knowledge. In that case, the habit also grows due to proper knowledge.

Again, rather than acquiring knowledge gained by others to win God's love, it is better to do things by knowing and understanding them from one's own realization. Thus, it is said that meditation is better than acquiring others' knowledge. Knowledge is also gained from meditation, and that comes from one's own realization. That is the true way to internalize matters. However, even if the mind is composed during meditation, an attachment to results may arise when meditation is broken. Therefore, it is said that renouncing the desire for the fruits of action is even better than meditation.

In this world, humans work to fulfill some desire of their own. The fruit that comes from work fulfills that desire. If that fruit is renounced, then what remains? It means they have renounced everything. But why or how do they make such a sacrifice? They do it for the sake of God.

One who can make such a great sacrifice for God is truly

the one showing the highest devotion to God. Therefore, one who can reach this level stands at the highest stage. Peace is gained from renunciation because worldly worries are what disturb humans. If there is worry about worldly matters, perfection is not achieved through practice, knowledge, or meditation. True peace is found only in renouncing attachment to worldly objects and results. In that case, there is no lingering pull. Life becomes free and independent.

By renouncing the fruits of action, if that also turns into a habit, the desire for spiritual knowledge arises. When knowledge is gained, one meditates or thinks within themselves to realize the matters. This is how gradual progress happens. However, if one can focus on devotion directly by themselves at once, that is the best way. It also saves time. Sri Krishna says:

Verse 12.13-14 One who is free from hatred toward all living beings, friendly and compassionate, free from the sense of possession and false ego, balanced in pleasure and pain, forgiving, ever-content, engaged in yoga, self-controlled, possessed of firm resolve, and whose mind and intellect are offered to Me—such a devotee is dear to Me.

Verse 12.15 He by whom the world is not agitated and who is not agitated by the world, who is free from joy,

envy, fear, and anxiety—he is also dear to Me.

Verse 12.16 A devotee of Mine who is desireless, pure, expert and skillful, indifferent and impartial, free from mental distress, and who has renounced the fruits of all endeavors—he is dear to Me.

Verse 12.17 One who neither rejoices nor hates, who neither grieves nor desires, and who has renounced both good and evil—such a person, full of devotion, is dear to Me.

Verse 12.18-19 He who is equal toward enemy and friend, and in honor and dishonor; who is balanced in cold and heat, pleasure and pain, and free from all attachment; who treats praise and blame as the same, is silent and controlled in speech, content with whatever comes his way, unattached to home and steady in mind—such a person, full of devotion, is dear to Me.

Verse 12.20 Those who follow this immortal nectar of dharma as described above, being endowed with faith and making Me their supreme goal—such devotees are exceedingly dear to Me.

(Commentary 12.13-20) One who is free from hatred toward all beings, friendly, compassionate, free from possessiveness, and liberated from false ego; who remains the same in pleasure and pain, is forgiving,

content, self-controlled, firm in resolve, and whose mind and intellect are offered to the Supreme Lord—such a devotee is dear to God.

He because of whom no one is put into anxiety or distress, and who himself is not agitated by others; who is free from the extremes of joy, anger, fear, and anxiety—he is dear to God.

One who is impartial, pure, expert and skillful, indifferent and free from worry, and who has renounced the desire to enjoy the fruits of all efforts—such a devotee is dear to Him.

One who is not overly elated by anything, nor harbors hatred; who does not sink into grief, nor harbors excessive cravings; who knows how to renounce both the auspicious and inauspicious—such a person, full of devotion, is dear to God.

One who is equal toward enemy and friend, in honor and dishonor; balanced in cold and heat, pleasure and pain, and free from bad company; who remains the same in praise and blame, is restrained in speech, content with whatever little is obtained, unattached to a home and possessed of steady wisdom—such a person is dear to God.

Those who follow these immortal words of dharma with

faith and worship God or perform their duties accordingly are exceedingly dear to Him. Without these qualities, one can never be pure. However, a true devotee does not have to struggle to acquire these virtues through separate effort. The knowledge that enters a devotee of God naturally adorns them with these noble qualities. As it is said:

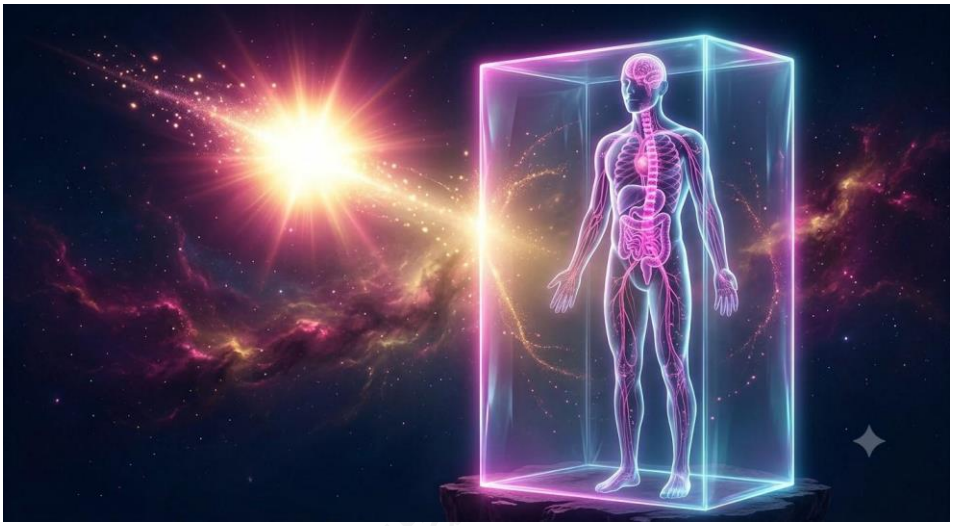
"And those who believe and do righteous deeds - those are the companions of Paradise; they will abide therein eternally." (Al-Quran 2:82)

When one takes refuge in devotion to attain God after becoming aware of the supreme goal, it is called **'Bhakti Yoga'**.

Marvelous Gita by AZM Alamgir

Chapter 13: The Field and the Knower of the Field

(Total Verses: 35)



Summary: The primary goal of life is to be liberated from the painful bondage of the material world and to attain a life of supreme happiness and infinite bliss. God is that goal, the source of supreme happiness. Therefore, one must strive to attain God. To reach Him, one must be free from the cycle of birth and death. One who understands the difference between the "Field" and the "Knower of the Field" knows the way to be free from the bonds of material nature. Such individuals attain the supreme destination and are not bound again by rebirth in the material world. This is liberation. Therefore, instead of

abandoning action out of grief or delusion, one should work with proper knowledge to become free from bondage. The means of liberation lies in the knowledge of the distinction between the Field and its Knower. This chapter discusses how to apply this knowledge to achieve freedom.

Verses and Commentary

Verse 13.1 Arjuna said: O Kesava! I wish to know about Nature (Prakriti) and the Enjoyer (Purusha); the Field (Kshetra) and the Knower of the Field (Kshetrajna); and Knowledge (Jnana) and the Object of Knowledge (Jneya).

Verse 13.2 The Blessed Lord said: O son of Kunti! This body is called the Field (Kshetra). Those who know this body call him the Knower of the Field (Kshetrajna).

Verse 13.3 O descendant of Bharata! Know Me to be the Knower of the Field in all Fields. Understanding the Field and the Knower of the Field is what I consider to be true Knowledge.

(Commentary 13.1) Arjuna expresses his desire to learn about Prakriti-Purusha, Kshetra-Kshetrajna, and Jnana-Jneya. It should be noted that the word Purusha (Person/Enjoyer) here is not used in a gendered sense. It

refers to the living entity regardless of gender.

(Commentary 13.2) Sri Krishna explains that the body is the Field (Kshetra) or the arena of activity. The Field is material nature (Jada Prakriti), which has no consciousness of its own. However, the one who knows the body must be conscious. The one who knows the body is called the Knower of the Field (Kshetrajna). The individual soul (Jiva) is this Knower. Thus, the essence of the living being, the Soul (Atma), is the Knower. The Soul represents the "I" or the "Self." The Soul is living and conscious. Material nature gains the appearance of consciousness through the presence of the Soul.

In the Upanishads, this Nature and Person are referred to as the Field and the Knower. In the Gita, they are identified as the Inferior (Apara) and Superior (Para) energies of God. The Field is material nature, and the Knower is the living energy. The body and the soul are not the same; they are distinct. The body is unconscious matter, while the soul is living and conscious.

This can be understood in two stages:

1. **The Universal Field:** The cosmic body of God, within which we all reside. This is our external material nature.
2. **The Individual Field:** The body of each individual living being, which is also material.

Similarly, there are two types of Knowers:

- **The Individual Soul (Jivatma):** The master of the individual body.
- **The Supreme Soul (Paramatma):** The Knower within all bodies and the master of the entire universe.

Without the Supreme Soul, the individual soul has no independent existence or refuge. Every individual soul is connected to the Supreme Soul. Without this connection, the individual is nothing but lifeless matter. As it is said:

"Allah! ... He is the Living, the Eternal, the Sustainer of [all] existence!" (Al-Quran 2:255)

(Commentary 13.3) The individual soul knows its own body (Field), yet even that knowledge is incomplete. It knows very little about God. However, the Supreme Soul (God) knows everything. He knows the entire cosmic Field and every individual Knower within it. Therefore, the Supreme Personality is the ultimate Knower. As it is said:

"He knows whatever is in the heavens and the earth and knows what you conceal and what you declare. And Allah is Knowing of that within the breasts." (Al-Quran 64:4)

"Vision perceives Him not, but He perceives [all] vision; and He is the Subtle, the Acquainted." (Al-Quran 6:103)

Sri Krishna states that true knowledge is understanding the distinction between the Field (body, nature, environment) and the Knower (the Soul). To know God is true knowledge because He is the source of both the Field and the Knower.

Verse 13.4 Hear from Me in brief what that Field is, what its nature is, how it changes, where it originates, who that Knower is, and what His powers are.

Verse 13.5 Sages have described these truths in various Vedic hymns and specifically in the Brahma-sutras, where they are presented with certainty and logic.

(Commentary 13.4-5) Sri Krishna mentions that various wise men have discussed these topics in the Upanishads. The Vedanta philosophy explains them through logical cause-and-effect relationships. The Vedas are the direct words of God (Shruti). Each Veda (Rig, Sama, Yajur, Atharva) consists of four parts: Samhita, Brahmana, Aranyaka, and Upanishad. While the first two deal with rituals, the latter two deal with Knowledge (Jnana-kanda). The Upanishads are also known as Vedanta (the end or essence of the Vedas), which provides the philosophical basis for understanding the Soul and Brahman.

Verse 13.6-7 The five great elements, the ego, the

intellect, and the unmanifested (nature); the ten senses and the one mind; the five objects of the senses; and desire, hatred, pleasure, pain, the physical body, consciousness, and determination—all these, in brief, constitute the Field and its modifications.

Verse 13.8-12 Humility, pridelessness, non-violence, tolerance, simplicity, service to the teacher, cleanliness, steadiness, and self-control; renunciation of sense objects and absence of ego; perception of the evil of birth, death, old age, and disease; detachment and absence of obsession with son, wife, and home; constant even-mindedness in both desirable and undesirable events; unswerving devotion to Me; living in a secluded place and distaste for crowds; constancy in self-knowledge and perception of the goal of truth—all these are declared to be Knowledge. Whatever is contrary to this is ignorance.

(Commentary 13.6-7) Material nature (Prakriti) is the source of the physical world. It consists of three qualities (Gunas): Sattva (Harmony), Rajas (Energy/Activity), and Tamas (Inertia). When these qualities are in balance, nature is unmanifested. When the balance is disturbed, creation begins.

From this arise:

- **Mahat-tattva:** The great intelligence.
- **Ahankara:** The Ego (the sense of "I"), which creates distinctions.
- **Five Subtle Elements (Tanmatras):** Sound, touch, form, taste, smell.
- **Eleven Senses:** Five knowledge-gathering senses (eyes, ears, nose, tongue, skin), five active senses (hands, feet, speech, anus, genitals), and the mind.
- **Five Gross Elements:** Space, air, fire, water, earth.

  Together, these 24 elements (according to Samkhya philosophy) constitute the material Field. The 25th element is the Purusha (the Soul), which is conscious and distinct. The body undergoes six changes: birth, growth, sustenance, reproduction, decay, and death. The Field is temporary matter, but its owner, the Knower, is eternal.

  (Commentary 13.8-12) These verses define the qualities that constitute "Knowledge." Knowledge is not just bookish information; it is the realization that leads to transformation.

- **Humility:** Not seeking honor from others.
- **Tolerance:** The ability to endure insult without agitation, seeking only God's approval.

- **Simplicity:** Being straightforward and truthful.
- **Cleanliness:** Both internal (purity of heart) and external.
- **Steadiness:** Firm determination in spiritual pursuit.
- **Absence of Ego:** Not identifying the self with the temporary physical body.
- **Detachment:** Not being so obsessed with family or home that it hinders spiritual progress. As noted:

  "O you who have believed, indeed, among your wives and your children are enemies to you [who may hinder you from God], so beware of them." (Al-Quran 64:14)

  Everything that helps one realize the Soul and serve God is "Knowledge." Anything that keeps one bound to the ego and material desires is "Ignorance." These qualities are the means to liberation. While the individual soul is bound by the three Gunas through the body, the Supreme Soul (Paramatma) remains untouched by them.

  Verse 13.13 I shall now describe that which is to be known, by knowing which one tastes the eternal nectar of liberation. This is the beginningless Supreme Brahman, which is My impersonal form. It is said to be neither being (manifest) nor non-being (unmanifest).

  Verse 13.14 Everywhere are His hands and legs,

everywhere His eyes, heads, and faces, and He has ears everywhere. In this way, He exists, pervading everything in the universe.

Verse 13.15 He is the source of all senses and their functions, yet He is without senses. He is unattached, yet He is the maintainer of all. He is beyond the qualities of nature (Nirguna), yet He is the enjoyer and master of all qualities.

Verse 13.16 The Supreme Truth exists outside and inside of all living beings, the moving and the unmoving. Because He is subtle, He is beyond the power of the material senses to see or know. Although far, far away, He is also near to all.

Verse 13.17 Although the Supreme Soul appears to be divided among all beings, He is never divided. He is situated as one. Although He is the maintainer of every living entity, it must be understood that He devours and develops all.

Verse 13.18 He is the source of light in all luminous objects. He is beyond the darkness of matter and is unmanifested. He is knowledge, the object of knowledge, and the goal of knowledge. He is situated in everyone's heart.

Verse 13.19 Thus the Field (Kshetra), Knowledge (Jnana),

and the Object of Knowledge (Jneya) have been briefly described by Me. Only My devotees can understand this thoroughly and thus attain My nature.

(Commentary 13.13) Now, the "Object of Knowledge"—that which must be known—is being discussed. Humans naturally seek this knowledge once their basic needs are met. This knowledge brings soul-satisfaction and the "taste of nectar." The object of knowledge is **Brahman**. Brahman is the impersonal, beginningless, and infinite form of God. It is the all-pervading reality in which everything exists.

The evolution of the soul within the body is described through five stages or "sheaths" (Koshas):

1. **Annamaya-kosha:** The physical body made of food/matter.
2. **Pranamaya-kosha:** The vital energy/life force.
3. **Manomaya-kosha:** The mental sheath (mind and five senses).
4. **Vijnanamaya-kosha:** The intellectual sheath (wisdom and truth).
5. **Anandamaya-kosha:** The bliss sheath (spiritual life in God).

To realize God, one must understand Him in three aspects:

- **Brahman:** The all-pervading impersonal energy.
- **Paramatma:** The localized aspect situated in every heart.
- **Bhagavan:** The Supreme Person who encompasses everything.

(Commentary 13.14) Brahman is described as having infinite hands, eyes, and ears, meaning God perceives everything simultaneously. As stated:

"Allah encompasses all things." (Al-Quran 4:126)

"How clearly He sees and how finely He hears!" (Al-Quran 18:26)

(Commentary 13.15) All sensory perceptions are possible only because of the "Knower of the Field." While we have material senses, the Supreme Knower's way of perceiving is transcendental. It is said,

"Who is it that hears and sees [for you]?" — (Al-Quran 10:31)

"...Allah is the Manifest Truth (The One who makes the Truth clear)." — (Al-Quran 24:25)

He maintains everything without being attached to

anything. He is Nirguna (beyond material qualities) yet the master of all qualities.

"Allah! ... The Sustainer of all existence." (Al-Quran 2:255)

"Allah is free from need of the worlds (Al-Quran 3:97,29:6)."

(Commentary 13.16) God is present within the smallest atom and the largest galaxy. Because He is so subtle, he cannot be "seen" by material eyes.

"Vision perceives Him not... He is the Subtle, the Acquainted." (Al-Quran 6:103)

"We are closer to him than [his] jugular vein." (Al-Quran 50:16)

(Commentary 13.17) Although God lives in every heart (appearing divided), He remains one and undivided. He is the creator, the sustainer, and the destroyer.

"He is Allah, [who is] One." (Al-Quran 112:1)

"He originates creation and then repeats it." (Al-Quran 85:13)

Scriptures provide the "formula," and humans are encouraged to reach God in two ways:

1. **Through Knowledge:** Discovering the greatness of the

Creator through His creation until one surrenders.

2. **Through Faith:** Placing absolute trust and devotion in God above all doubts.

(Commentary 13.18) He is the "Light of lights." Darkness is merely the absence or obstruction of His light.

"Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth..." (Al-Quran 24:35)

He is not just the process of knowing (Knowledge) but also the Subject (Object of Knowledge) and the Destination (Goal of Knowledge). He resides in the heart of all.

"Allah comes in between a man and his heart." (Al-Quran 8:24)

(Commentary 13.19) Sri Krishna concludes this summary by stating that only devotees truly grasp these truths. Without faith and devotion, one cannot enter the "depths" of this knowledge. One who listens with an open heart and follows the best of it is guided to the truth.

"Those who listen to the Word and follow the best of it... those are the people of understanding." (Al-Quran 39:18)

By understanding the Field (matter) and the Knower (spirit/God), a person attains the Brahma-bhuta state—a

state of transcendental bliss beyond the three qualities of nature.

Verse 13.20 Know that both Nature (Prakriti) and the Living Entity (Purusha) are beginningless. Know also that all modifications (transformations) and the three modes of material nature are born of Prakriti.

Verse 13.21 Nature is said to be the cause of all material causes and effects (the body and senses), while the living entity is said to be the cause of the various sufferings and enjoyments in this world.

Verse 13.22 Since the living entity is situated in material nature, he enjoys the modes of nature (Gunas). His association with those modes is the cause of his birth in good and evil wombs.

(Commentary 13.20) Sri Krishna states that both Nature and the Soul are beginningless (Anadi). They existed even before the manifest creation. They are both energies of the Supreme Lord. While we previously discussed this in terms of the "Field" and the "Knower" according to Vedanta, it is now explained through the lens of Samkhya philosophy as Prakriti and Purusha.

The soul is a part of God and possesses His qualities. Its only true duty is to serve Him. However, when the soul becomes attracted to one of the three modes of material

nature—Sattva (goodness), Rajas (passion), or Tamas (ignorance)—it forgets its true identity. It becomes a prisoner of the material body. The soul's entanglement in these modes is the reason for its transformations and suffering. As it is said:

"O mankind, your rebellion is only against yourselves, [being merely] the enjoyment of worldly life. Then to Us is your return." (Al-Quran 10:23 / 35:5 referenced contextually)

(Commentary 13.21-22) The soul is actually a "non-doer" (Akarta). It sits silently within the body, neutral and observing.

How does action happen? The body acts like an automatic machine. External nature and the environment trigger the senses, and the body reacts instantly based on its inherent nature (Sattva, Rajas, or Tamas).

While the **body** is the cause of the action, the **soul** is the one who experiences the resulting happiness or distress.

Example: Imagine a male butterfly sitting still on a leaf (the non-doer soul). When a female butterfly flies by (external nature), the male butterfly's body immediately pursues her. The pursuit is the body's reaction triggered by its nature (Rajas), but the soul within experiences the outcome of that chase.

The quality of one's association with these modes determines their next birth.

- **Sattva:** Leads to birth among godly or wise beings.
- **Rajas:** Leads to birth among humans (driven by desire).
- **Tamas:** Leads to birth among animals, birds, or insects.

The soul is responsible for the "home" (body) it acquires. If one lives a life of ego and transgression, they may fall into "Hawiyah" (a state of misery/hell).

"And his mother will be Hawiyah. And what can make you know what that is? It is a Fire, intensely hot." (Al-Quran 101:9-11)

To stop this cycle of birth and death, one must return to their original nature—the Brahma-bhava—which is beyond these three modes.

Verse 13.23 Yet in this body there is another, a transcendental enjoyer, who is the Overseer, the Permitter, the Supporter, and the Supreme Lord. He is known as the Supersoul (Paramatma).

(Commentary 13.23) The body is dead matter; it only appears conscious because of the Soul. But the Soul is not alone. There is a second Supreme Presence within the body: the **Supersoul** (Paramatma). He is the constant

companion of the individual soul.

- **The Witness:** He sees everything we do.

  "He is with you wherever you are. And Allah is Seeing of what you do." (Al-Quran 57:4)

- **The Permitter:** The individual soul only has the power to desire. The power to execute that desire comes from the Supersoul. If you feel an internal "yes" or "no" when making a choice, that is the guidance of the Permitter.

  God provides guidance through scriptures and internal conscience. While he gives the soul freedom to choose, he is always eager for the soul to choose the path of liberation and return to the Supreme Nature.

  Verse 13.24 One who understands this philosophy concerning the living entity, material nature, and the interaction of the modes of nature is certain to attain liberation. He will not take birth here again, regardless of his present position.

  (Commentary 13.24) This verse explains that true knowledge is the key to freedom. One must realize:

1. The body is material nature (Jada).
2. The soul is spiritual nature (Para).
3. Their interaction (the Gunas) causes bondage.

To be liberated, one must rise above Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas. This state is called Nirguna (beyond modes) or the Brahmic state.

Understanding this philosophy doesn't just mean "knowing" the facts; it means realizing the process of liberation. When a person realizes how they are bound, they naturally seek the way out. This realization provides the inspiration to strive for the spiritual world, where suffering ends and birth is no more.

Verse 13.25 Some perceive the Supersoul within themselves through meditation, others through the cultivation of knowledge (Sankhya Yoga), and still others through selfless action (Karma Yoga).

Verse 13.26 Again, there are those who, although not conversant in spiritual knowledge, begin to worship the Supreme Personality upon hearing about Him from others. Because of their tendency to hear from authorities, they also transcend the path of birth and death.

(Commentary 13.25) Can the Supreme Lord be seen with physical eyes? Those who "see" God actually experience Him through the "eyes of knowledge." This is a divine blessing, but it requires practice (Sadhana). One's inner self must be honest and pure.

- **Meditation:** Diving deep into the self to realize the presence of God.
  "And remember the name of your Lord and devote yourself to Him with a complete devotion." (Al-Quran 73:8)

- **Sankhya (Knowledge):** Analyzing the difference between matter and spirit. This is similar to scientific research—seeking the Truth behind the physical world.
  "Allah created the heavens and the earth in truth. Indeed in that is a sign for the believers." (Al-Quran 29:44)

- **Karma Yoga:** Acting without desire for results, serving the world as an act of worship.
  "Wealth and children will not bring you closer to Us... but whoever believes and does good, those will have the proximity." (Al-Quran 34:37)

(Commentary 13.26) Not everyone is a philosopher or a meditator. Some simply listen to the truth from realized souls with sincere faith. By following the right path through "hearing," they also cross the ocean of material death.

Verse 13.27 O chief of the Bharatas, know that whatever you see in existence, both the moving and the unmoving, is only a combination of the field of activities and the knower of the field.

(Commentary 13.27) Everything in this world is a mixture of Matter (Field) and Spirit (Knower). Just as a seed needs a field to grow, the Soul (Spirit) interacts with Material Nature to manifest life.

"Your wives are as a tilth (field) unto you." (Al-Quran 2:223)

In this grand creation, Matter provides the form, but without the Soul, there is no growth or consciousness. God places the "seed" of the soul into material nature according to his will.

"Allah creates what He wills. Indeed, Allah is over all things competent." (Al-Quran 24:45)

Verse 13.28 One who sees the Supersoul accompanying the individual soul in all bodies, and who understands that neither the soul nor the Supersoul within the destructible body is ever destroyed, actually sees.

Verse 13.29 One who sees the Supersoul equally present everywhere, in every living being, does not degrade himself by his mind. Thus he approaches the transcendental destination.

Verse 13.30 One who can see that all activities are performed by the body, which is created of material nature, and sees that the self does nothing, actually sees.

Verse 13.31 When a sensible man ceases to see different identities due to different material bodies and he sees how beings are expanded everywhere, he attains to the Brahman conception.

Verse 13.32 Those with the vision of eternity can see that the imperishable soul is transcendental, eternal, and beyond the modes of nature. Despite contact with the material body, O Arjuna, the soul neither does anything nor is entangled.

(Commentary 13.28-29) While bodies are destroyed, the Soul and Supersoul are eternal. A person who realizes that God resides in everyone—including themselves—gains immense self-respect and mental strength. They do not let themselves "fall" or degrade into ignorance.

"He has succeeded who purifies the soul, and he has failed who instills it [with corruption]." (Al-Quran 91:9-10)

(Commentary 13.30-32) The body acts based on its nature, but the Soul is the "non-doer." When you realize that the Soul is distinct from the body's actions, you become free from the "bondage of karma." Although the soul stays in the body, it remains untouched by the body's qualities, just as the Supersoul is never affected by the material world.

"Everything will perish except His Face (His Being)." (Al-

Quran 28:88)

Verse 13.33 The sky, due to its subtle nature, does not mix with anything, although it is all-pervading. Similarly, the soul situated in Brahman vision does not mix with the body, though situated in the body.

Verse 13.34 O son of Bharata, as the sun alone illuminates all this universe, so does the living entity, one within the body, illuminate the entire body by consciousness.

Verse 13.35 Those who see with eyes of knowledge the difference between the body and the knower of the body, and can also understand the process of liberation from bondage in material nature, attain to the supreme goal.

(Commentary 13.33-34) How can the soul be in the body but not of the body?

1. **The Sky Analogy:** Space is everywhere, but if you burn a fire, the space itself doesn't burn. It is too subtle to be affected. The Soul is similarly subtle.
2. **The Sun Analogy:** A single sun lights up the whole world. Similarly, the Soul sits in one place but its "light" (Consciousness) spreads throughout the entire body.

(Commentary 13.35) Knowledge is the ultimate tool. By

distinguishing the "Field" (Body) from the "Knower" (Soul), one discovers the path to liberation. One who lives with this awareness—realizing the body does the work while the soul remains the neutral observer—reaches the Supreme Destination.

Marvelous Gita by A Z M Alamgir

Chapter 14: Gunatraya Vibhaga Yoga

(The Yoga of Differentiating the Three Modes of Nature)

(Total Verses: 27)

Summary: This chapter discusses the three modes (Gunas) of material nature. These three modes bind the living entity to the material body. By rising above these modes to the transcendental state, one can attain the nature of the Supreme. Then, one is no longer bound by birth in a material body. This is the liberation of the soul from the bondage of nature. Liberation marks the end of all suffering. Understanding these subjects is essential so that a person can become aware of their goal and strive to achieve it.

Verses and Commentary

Verse 14.1 The Supreme Lord said: Again, I shall declare to you this supreme wisdom, the best of all knowledge, by knowing which all the sages have attained the highest perfection after departing from this world.

Verse 14.2 By taking shelter of this knowledge, one can attain a nature like My own. Thus, one is not born at the time of creation nor disturbed at the time of dissolution.

(Commentary 14.1) The soul is free and independent. It is of the supreme nature and transcendental (Brahma-bhuta). It is not entangled in anything and is a non-doer. However, coming into the material world, it becomes bound by the material body due to the influence of the modes of nature. Consequently, it acts according to its acquired nature, takes birth in good or evil wombs, and experiences happiness and distress.

The sages of the past attained perfection and liberation from the bondage of the body by taking shelter of this knowledge. Sri Krishna is now imparting this "supreme wisdom" to Arjuna.

(Commentary 14.2) By following this knowledge, one can attain the "Supreme Nature"—the nature of God

Himself. God is not affected by the modes of nature. Therefore, one does not become trapped in the cycle of birth and death.

That which we refer to as "I" or "Self" is the soul (Atma) within the body. The soul, being a part of God, has no birth or death. When the soul is imprisoned in the body and falls under the spell of the three modes of material nature, it becomes deluded. It forgets its true form and loses its identity. To be saved from this state and return to one's original nature is to find liberation from material agony.

"For those who are the devoted servants of Allah, there is a provision determined... They will say: 'Now death will not touch us except our first death.' Indeed, this is the great success." (Al-Quran 37:40-60)

Verse 14.3 O Bharat! This Great Brahman (Material Nature) is My womb, in which I place the seed of creation. From that, all living entities are born.

Verse 14.4 O son of Kunti! Of all the forms that are born in all wombs, the Great Brahman is the mother-like womb, and I am the seed-giving father.

(Commentary 14.3) This "Great Brahman" refers to Nature (Prakriti), the manifest world we see before us. This is the "Field" (Kshetra). In this field, the seed of

creation—consciousness or the "Knower of the Field"—is placed. This connection is the act of "impregnation," which happens by the will of God.

"He is the one who shapes you in the wombs however He wills. There is no deity except Him, the Exalted in Might, the Wise." (Al-Quran 3:6)

(Commentary 14.4) For every individual living entity born in various forms, the Great Brahman (Material Nature) acts as the mother, and God acts as the father by providing the seed of life. God Himself neither takes birth nor gives birth in a biological sense.

"Say: He is Allah... He neither begets nor is He born." (Al-Quran 112:1-4)

Verse 14.5 O mighty-armed one! Sattva (goodness), Rajas (passion), and Tamas (ignorance)—these modes, born of material nature, bind the imperishable living entity to the body.

(Commentary 14.5) The "Field" is material nature, but the "Knower of the Field" (the soul) is not material. The soul is imperishable and conscious. How is such a conscious entity bound to the material field? It is bound by the three modes: **Sattvic, Rajasic, and Tamasic**. These modes delude the soul, covering its true knowledge. The soul becomes so enchanted that it no longer wishes to leave

the material bond, or sometimes becomes so helpless that it cannot leave.

"Whoever follows the guidance does so for his own good; and whoever goes astray does so to his own loss." (Al-Quran 10:108)

Verse 14.6 O sinless one! Of these, the mode of goodness (Sattva), being purer than the others, is illuminating and free from all sins. It binds the soul by attachment to happiness and knowledge.

Verse 14.7 The mode of passion (Rajas) is born of unlimited desires and longings. O son of Kunti! It binds the living entity by attachment to material fruitive actions.

Verse 14.8 O son of Bharat! Know that the mode of ignorance (Tamas), born of darkness, is the delusion of all living entities. It binds the soul through madness, indolence, and sleep.

(Commentary 14.6) Sattva is considered the best of the three. It represents high mentality, purity, and clarity. It binds through the "ego of knowledge." A person in Sattva feels happy and wise, but this happiness creates an attachment; they do not want to leave this comfortable state. To reach liberation, one must eventually go even beyond Sattva to the Nirguna (transcendental) state.

(Commentary 14.7) Rajas is characterized by intense longing. It creates a desire for what one does not have and an attachment to what one already possesses. It is driven by the attraction between male and female. It leads to hard work for the sake of prestige, family, and sensory pleasure. Most of the material world operates under this mode.

(Commentary 14.8) Tamas is the manifestation of ignorance. It deludes the soul, leading to laziness, excessive sleep, and a lack of desire for knowledge. It covers the truth and leads to intoxication or meaningless behavior.

Verse 14.9 O Bharat! Sattva binds one to happiness, Rajas binds one to fruitive action, and Tamas, covering one's knowledge, binds one to madness.

Verse 14.10 O son of Bharat! Sometimes the mode of goodness becomes prominent, defeating passion and ignorance. Sometimes the mode of passion defeats goodness and ignorance, and at other times ignorance defeats goodness and passion.

(Commentary 14.10) All three modes exist within every living being, but one mode dominates at any given time. This dominance is influenced by past impressions (Sanskaras) and the current environment. This

competition between modes is actually a blessing; if we are in Tamas, we can strive to move into Rajas and then into Sattva, eventually rising above all three.

"And We have shown him the two ways (of good and evil). But he has not attempted the uphill climb (to a higher state)." (Al-Quran 90:10-11)

Verse 14.11 When all the gates of the body are illuminated by knowledge, then it should be known that the mode of goodness is prevalent.

Verse 14.12 O chief of the Bharatas! When the mode of passion increases, greed, intense endeavor, restlessness, and uncontrollable desire develop.

Verse 14.13 O son of Kuru! When the mode of ignorance increases, darkness, inaction, madness, and delusion are manifested.

(Commentary 14.11) You can tell Sattva is dominant when the senses are sharp, the mind is clear, and a sense of purity and joy is reflected on the person's face.

(Commentary 14.12) You can tell Rajas is dominant when a person is driven by greed. They are always busy, always wanting more, and their mind is never at peace.

(Commentary 14.13) You can tell Tamas is dominant when there is a lack of direction. The person is inactive,

their thinking is unhealthy, and they waste time in delusion without any higher purpose.

Verse 14.14 When a person dies in the mode of goodness (Sattva), they attain the pure and higher worlds of the great sages.

Verse 14.15 If one dies in the mode of passion (Rajas), they are born among those attached to fruitive activities (the human world). Similarly, if one dies in the mode of ignorance (Tamas), they take birth in the wombs of the deluded (animal species).

(Commentary 14.14) When death occurs while Sattvic qualities are dominant, the soul ascends to the pure realms of the sages, such as Brahmaloka or higher planetary systems, to experience celestial happiness.

"...Allah will surely separate the evil from the good." (Al-Quran 3:9)

(Commentary 14.15) Death in Rajas leads to rebirth among humans driven by material desire. Death in Tamas, however, causes the soul to fall into lower species—animals, insects, or plants—which represents a hellish life of suffering.

"...He will gather all the wicked ones together and cast them into Hell." (Al-Quran 8:37)

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To return to human form from lower species, the soul must undergo a long evolutionary process. Scriptures mention passing through 8.4 million species: 2 million as plants/stationary beings, 0.9 million as aquatic life, 0.9 million as reptiles/turtles, 1 million as birds, 3 million as beasts, and 0.4 million as monkey-like species before attaining human birth. Knowing this, one should strive for Sattva and ultimately rise above all modes to attain Brahma-bhava (the Divine state) and end all worldly agony.

Verse 14.16 The result of pious action in Sattva is pure happiness; the result of Rajas is misery; and the result of Tamas is ignorance.

Verse 14.17 From Sattva comes knowledge; from Rajas comes greed; and from Tamas come madness, delusion, and ignorance.

Verse 14.18 Those in Sattva go upward; those in Rajas remain in the middle; and those in the abominable mode of Tamas go downward.

(Commentary 14.16-18) Sattvic work is meritorious and leads to peace. Rajasic work, driven by endless competition and desire for status, leads to physical and mental distress. Tamasic work results in intoxication, madness, and a darkened life.

"...In the Hereafter, with your Lord, are various provisions for those who guard themselves [against evil]." (Al-Quran 43:35)

Rajasic people remain in the human world (Mrityuloka). This is a middle ground.

"The inhabitants of Paradise will call out to the inhabitants of the Fire... Between them will be a partition, and on its elevations (Al-A'raf) will be men who recognize each by their marks... they have not yet entered it (Paradise) but they hope." (Al-Quran 7:44-46)

Tamasic people sink into the lowest states of existence.

"Hell—they will burn therein, an evil resting place... there is boiling water and fluid of cold pus... and other punishments of its type." (Al-Quran 38:56-58)

Verse 14.19 When the seer perceives that there is no doer other than these modes, and knows the Supreme Lord who is transcendental to these modes, he attains My nature.

Verse 14.20 By transcending these three modes associated with the body, the living entity is freed from birth, death, old age, and their distresses, and enjoys the nectar of immortality.

(Commentary 14.19-20) A true seer realizes that the

soul (Atma) is a non-doer. It is the modes of nature (Gunas) and the mechanical body that perform actions. Once a person loses the false ego of "I am the doer" and realizes the Supreme Lord beyond the modes, they qualify for the Brahma-bhava (transcendental state). Even while living in the body, such a person experiences divine bliss.

"To your Lord is the final goal of all efforts." (Al-Quran 53:42)

"Unto Allah is your return." (Al-Quran 11:4)

Verse 14.21 Arjuna asked: O Lord! By what symptoms is one known who has transcended these three modes? What is his behavior, and how does he cross beyond these modes?

Verse 14.22 The Supreme Lord said: O son of Pandu! He who does not hate illumination (Sattva), activity (Rajas), or delusion (Tamas) when they are present, nor longs for them when they disappear;

Verse 14.23 Who is seated as if indifferent, undisturbed by the modes, knowing that "the modes alone are acting," and remains firm and unwavering;

Verses 14.24 Who is alike in pleasure and pain, established in the Self, regarding a clod of earth, a stone,

and gold as equal; who is steady amidst the pleasant and unpleasant, and is wise and equal in praise and blame;

Verse 14.25 Who is the same in honor and dishonor, equal to friend and foe, and has abandoned all material undertakings—he is said to have transcended the modes of nature.

(Commentary 14.22-25) These verses describe the Gunatita (one who has transcended the modes). Such a person is a silent witness to the mind's changes. They do not crave happiness nor hate distress, knowing both are temporary. To them, gold and stones are of equal value because their focus is solely on God. They are patient (Sabir) and equanimous in all social circumstances.

Verse 14.26 He who serves Me with unswerving devotion (Bhakti-yoga) transcends these modes of nature and becomes eligible to attain the state of Brahman.

Verse 14.27 And I am the basis of the impersonal Brahman, which is immortal, imperishable, and eternal, and is the constitution of ultimate happiness.

(Commentary 14.26) Crossing the modes is difficult, but it becomes easy through exclusive devotion to God. By engaging in His service, one is elevated to the Brahma-bhuta level.

"...Be attentive in your duty to your Lord and do good... Allah loves those who do good." (Al-Quran 5:93)

(Commentary 14.27) God is the source of the Brahman-effulgence, the Supersoul, and the Supreme Personality. To attain ultimate peace, one must attain Him.

"And to Allah belongs whatever is in the heavens and the earth. Allah ever encompasses all things." (Al-Quran 4:126)

The Quran and Bible also hint at attaining "God-like qualities" (immortality/divine knowledge) through following the right path.

"Finally, to Allah is the return of all matters." (Al-Quran 42:53)

Marvelous Gita by A ZM Alamgir

Chapter 15: Purushottama Yoga

(The Yoga of the Supreme Person)

(Total Verses: 20)

Summary: This chapter uses the symbolic example of an Ashvattha (Banyan) tree to explain the origin and expansion of creation and the material world. It describes how the living entity is bound within the material world, what the goal of life is, and how one must break these bonds to return to the source. A complete picture of life and the universe is presented through the imagery of this tree.

With a correct understanding of life and the world, a person should not be overwhelmed by grief over petty worldly matters. It is due to a lack of proper conception

regarding life's purpose that humans become overly absorbed in worldly affairs and become entangled. This chapter highlights the ultimate goal of life, enabling a person to focus on righteous action and knowledge rather than being overwhelmed by the results of material bondage, eventually striving for liberation (Moksha).

Verses and Commentary

Verse 15.1 The Supreme Lord said: It is said that there is an imperishable Ashvattha tree with its roots upward and its branches downward; its leaves are the Vedic hymns. One who knows this tree is the knower of the Vedas.

Verse 15.2 The branches of this tree, nourished by the three modes of material nature, extend downward and upward. Its twigs are the objects of the senses. This tree also has roots going down, which are bound to the fruitive actions of human society.

(Commentary 15.1) Through the example of a tree, the entire universe—its expansion, matter and spirit, the bondage of the living entity, the goal of life, and the means of liberation—is illustrated.

Imagine an Ashvattha tree whose roots, foundation, and origin are "above." This means the Supreme Being

(Parabrahman), who is superior to both the fallible and infallible, is the source. It is called "roots upward" because it originates from the highest planetary system of the universe. From there, the world spreads out like branches. Understanding the world in this way shows that the universe expands within Nature (Prakriti), while God is the root cause.

The branches extend downward, representing the various planetary systems and species (celestial, human, and animal) created through the sequence of Mahat-tattva, ego, etc. This tree is called "imperishable" because it has existed since time immemorial, and its historical beginning is unknown to the common man.

The leaves are the Vedic hymns. Just as a tree has many leaves, the Vedas have various rituals, rules, and codes. Why are these provided? The purpose of studying the Vedas is to know God—the root of the tree. One who understands the root, branches, and leaves of this tree is a true knower of the Vedas (Vedavid).

(Commentary 15.2) The twigs of this tree are the sense objects (sound, touch, etc.). Influenced by the three modes (Sattva, Rajas, Tamas), the branches spread. Higher branches represent the demigods and superior species, while lower branches represent various lower forms of life. The roots extending downward represent

the desires and fruitive actions that bind humans tightly to the material world.

Verse 15.3-4 The real form of this tree cannot be perceived in this world. No one can understand where it begins, where it ends, or where its foundation is. But with determination, one must cut down this strongly rooted tree with the weapon of detachment. Thereafter, one must seek that place from which, having gone, one never returns, and there surrender to that Primeval Person from whom everything has begun and extended since time immemorial.

Verse 15.5 Those who are free from false prestige, illusion, and faulty association, who understand the eternal, who are done with material lust, who are freed from the dualities of happiness and distress, and who, unbewildered, know how to surrender unto the Supreme Person, attain that eternal kingdom.

Verse 15.6 That supreme abode of Mine is not illumined by the sun or moon, nor by fire or electricity. Those who reach it never return to this material world.

(Commentary 15.3-4) The conditioned soul cannot perceive the true nature of this vast "universal tree." To escape it, one must use the "weapon of detachment" (Vairagya). As long as there is attachment to worldly

sense objects, one cannot focus on the spiritual goal. After detaching from the branches, one must seek the Root—the Supreme Lord—and surrender to Him.

"All praise is due to Allah, Lord of the heavens and Lord of the earth, Lord of the worlds. And to Him belongs [all] majesty within the heavens and the earth, and He is the Exalted in Might, the Wise." (Al-Quran 45:36-37)

(Commentary 15.5) To reach that eternal state, one must discard "I-ness" or false ego. Recognizing that everything belongs to God helps destroy the ego. One must become free from the dualities of life (happiness/distress) and focus on the Divine.

(Commentary 15.6) The destination is the abode of the Supreme Lord (Dhama). It is self-luminous and does not require external light sources like the sun or moon.

"Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth. The example of His light is like a niche within which is a lamp, the lamp is within glass, the glass as if it were a pearly [white] star lit from [the oil of] a blessed olive tree, neither of the east nor of the west, whose oil would almost glow even if untouched by fire. Light upon light!" (Al-Quran 24:35)

Once a soul returns there, it does not have to come back to this world of suffering.

"Wherein they will abide forever. Excellent is the settlement and residence." (Al-Quran 25:76)

Verse 15.7 The living entities in this conditioned world are My eternal fragmental parts. Due to conditioned life, they are struggling very hard with the six senses, which include the mind.

Verse 15.8 The living entity in the material world carries his different conceptions of life from one body to another, as the air carries aromas. Thus he takes one kind of body and again quits it to take another.

Verse 15.9 The living entity, thus taking another gross body, obtains a certain type of ear, eye, tongue, nose, and sense of touch, which are grouped about the mind. He thus enjoys a particular set of sense objects.

(Commentary 15.7) Every living entity is an eternal, minute part (Amsha) of the Supreme Lord. Just as a fragment of gold is gold, the soul shares the qualities of God (it is eternal and conscious). Even great controllers like Brahma or Shiva are parts of the Supreme.

"To Him belongs whoever is in the heavens and the earth. And those near Him are not prevented by arrogance from His worship, nor do they tire. They exalt [Him] night and day [and] do not slacken." (Al-Quran 21:19-20)

However, when the soul becomes attracted to the material modes, it forgets its duty as a servant of God and struggles for dominance.

"There is no one in the heavens and earth but that he comes to the Most Merciful as a servant." (Al-Quran 19:93)

When liberated, the soul enjoys the company of the Lord in His garden-like abode.

"He will admit them into gardens beneath which rivers flow, wherein they abide forever. Allah is pleased with them, and they are pleased with Him." (Al-Quran 58:22)

(Commentary 15.8-9) When the soul leaves a body, it carries its mind and senses (its "conceptions of life" or Sanskaras) to the next body, just as the wind carries the scent of flowers. The soul is the "master" (Ishvara) of its own body. Depending on its consciousness—whether divine or demonic—it receives a new body (human, animal, or celestial) to develop its desires further.

Even in a human form, different people have different experiences and knowledge because of the variations in their senses and mind carried from previous lives. If a soul falls into lower species due to bad deeds, it must pass through millions of births—plants, aquatics, reptiles, birds, and animals—before regaining a human birth.

"And there is no creature on [or within] the earth or bird that flies with its wings except [that they are] communities like you." (Al-Quran 6:38)

Verse 15.10 The foolish cannot understand how a living entity quits the body, nor can they see what sort of body he enjoys under the spell of the modes of nature. But one whose eyes are trained in knowledge can see all this.

Verse 15.11 The endeavoring transcendentalists who are situated in self-realization can see all this clearly. But those whose minds are not developed and who are not situated in self-realization cannot see what is taking place, though they may try.

(Commentary 15.10) Ignorant people cannot perceive who resides within the body, who enjoys life by connecting with the modes of nature, or how the soul departs at the moment of death. However, those with the "eyes of knowledge" understand these truths.

The body has two parts: the **gross body** (physical) and the **subtle body**. As discussed previously, the body is composed of 24 elements, including nature, the mahat-tattva, ego, and the senses.

At death, the gross body is destroyed, but the living entity transmigrates with the **subtle body**. It carries the knowledge, experiences, concepts, and education

acquired in the current life, much like the wind carries the subtle fragrance of flowers.

Based on past actions, the living entity accepts a new body and experiences the results of previous piety or sin via this subtle body. While some traits are inherited from parents, the core nature is shaped by past lives.

(Commentary 15.11) Who is the living entity? What is its true nature? How does it enjoy sense objects while bound in the body? Endeavoring yogis situated in self-realization can perceive these answers. But those who are unconscious of the self cannot realize this, no matter how hard they try.

Realization cannot be achieved through scriptural study alone. One must practice meditation (Samadhi) to perceive these truths from within. There must be a genuine desire for internal discovery, which requires conquering the senses. If the heart is drowned in external tendencies, realization will not dawn.

"Indeed, the successful are those who purify themselves." (Al-Quran 87:14)

Verse 15.12 The splendor of the sun, which dissipates the darkness of the whole world, comes from Me. And the splendor of the moon and the splendor of fire are also from Me.

Verse 15.13 I enter into each planet, and by My energy they stay in orbit. I become the moon and thereby supply the juice of life to all vegetables.

Verse 15.14 I am the fire of digestion in the bodies of all living entities, and I join with the air of life, outgoing and incoming, to digest the four kinds of food.

Verse 15.15 I am seated in everyone's heart, and from Me come remembrance, knowledge, and forgetfulness. By all the Vedas, I am to be known. Indeed, I am the compiler of Vedanta, and I am the knower of the Vedas.

(Commentary 15.12-13) The radiance of the sun, moon, and fire originates from the Supreme Lord. Whether it is light, heat, or electrical energy, all are manifestations of His infinite power. Humans merely learn to use these pre-existing energies. His energy nourishes the plant kingdom, which in turn sustains all living beings. He is the cause of gravity that keeps planets floating in space.

"It is He who created the night and the day, and the sun and the moon; all [heavenly bodies] in an orbit are swimming." (Al-Quran 21:33)

"Do they not see the birds above them with wings outspread and [sometimes] folded in? None holds them [aloft] except the Most Merciful." (Al-Quran 67:19)

(Commentary 15.14) The digestive juices, enzymes, and the internal "fire" (Vaishvanara) that process food are powers granted by Him. He assists in the digestion of four types of food: those chewed, sucked, licked, and drunk. We survive only by His grace; He resides even in our stomachs as the power of metabolism.

(Commentary 15.15) God is not just all-pervasive in the universe; He dwells in every heart as the **Supersoul** (Paramatma).

"Allah comes between a man and his heart." (Al-Quran 8:24)

Memory, knowledge, and forgetfulness come from Him. He gives memory so we can function, and as people age or deviate, He may withdraw it.

"...and among you is he who is reversed to the most abject age so that he will not know, after [having had] knowledge, a thing." (Al-Quran 16:70)

The ultimate goal of all Vedic knowledge is to know Him. Science is essentially a gradual reading of God's "Veda" (knowledge) through investigation.

"And that to your Lord is the finality [of all things]." (Al-Quran 53:42)

"And to Allah is the return of all matters." (Al-Quran 42:53)

He is the author and the interpreter of all scriptures.

"Then, indeed, upon Us is its clarification." (Al-Quran 75:19)

"And they will know that Allah is the manifest Truth." (Al-Quran 24:25)

Verse 15.16 There are two classes of beings: the fallible and the infallible. In the material world every living entity is fallible, and in the spiritual world every living entity is called infallible.

Verse 15.17 Besides these two, there is the greatest living personality, the Supreme Soul, the imperishable Lord Himself, who has entered the three worlds and is maintaining them.

Verse 15.18 Because I am transcendental, beyond both the fallible and the infallible, and because I am the greatest, I am celebrated both in the world and in the Vedas as that Supreme Person (Purushottama).

Verse 15.19 Whoever knows Me as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, without doubting, is the knower of everything. He therefore engages himself in full devotional service to Me, O son of Bharata.

Verse 15.20 This is the most confidential part of the Vedic scriptures, O sinless one, and it is disclosed now by

Me. Whoever understands this will become wise, and his endeavors will know perfection.

(Commentary 15.16-18) Beings are classified as **Fallible** (Kshara)—those in the material world whose bodies change and decay—and **Infallible** (Akshara)—those in the spiritual world who possess eternal forms.

"...those are the companions of Paradise; they will abide therein eternally as a reward for what they used to do." (Al-Quran 46:14)

But superior to both is the **Supreme Person** (Purushottama). He is the maintainer of the three worlds. There is nothing equal to or greater than Him.

"And there is none comparable to Him." (Al-Quran 112:4)

"Say: Call upon Allah or call upon the Most Merciful (Ar-Rahman). Whichever [name] you call—to Him belong the best names." (Al-Quran 17:110)

(Commentary 15.19-20) Even today, many are confused about whether the Creator is personal or impersonal, one or many. Doubt prevents stability.

"Indeed, you are in differing speech (opinions). Deluded away from it is he who is deluded." (Al-Quran 51:8-9)

"And if you obey most of those upon the earth, they will

mislead you from the way of Allah. They follow not except assumption..." (Al-Quran 6:116)

The Gita concludes that one who accepts the Supreme Lord without doubt is the truly wise person (Sarva-vit). This faith leads to self-confidence—the greatest asset in life. By knowing this "most confidential" truth, one becomes intelligent and successful in the journey of life.

Marvelous Gita by A Z M Alamgir

Chapter 16: The Divine and Demoniac Natures

(Total Verse 24)

Summary: There are two types of natures within humans: the **Divine** (godly) and the **Demoniac** (un-godly). Divine qualities lead to liberation, while demoniac qualities lead to bondage. The primary goal of life is to attain liberation from material bondage. Therefore, one must acquire divine wealth and abandon demoniac tendencies. By following the path of true knowledge, liberation becomes possible. This chapter identifies these qualities as "wealth" or "assets."

Verses and Commentary

Verse 16.1-3 The Supreme Lord said: Fearlessness, purification of one's existence, cultivation of spiritual knowledge, charity, self-control, performance of sacrifice, study of the Vedas, austerity, simplicity, nonviolence, truthfulness, freedom from anger, renunciation, tranquility, aversion to fault-finding, compassion for all living entities, freedom from covetousness, gentleness, modesty, steady determination, vigor, forgiveness, fortitude, cleanliness, and freedom from envy and the passion for honor—these transcendental qualities, O son of Bharata, belong to godly men endowed with divine nature.

Verse 16.4 Pride, arrogance, conceit, anger, harshness, and ignorance—these qualities belong to those of demoniac nature, O son of Pritha.

Verse 16.5 The transcendental qualities are conducive to liberation, whereas the demoniac qualities make for bondage. Do not worry, O son of Pandu, for you are born with the divine qualities.

16.1-3 Commentary: Divine wealth refers to godly nature and attributes. Those in the mode of goodness (Sattva-guna) possess these. Key qualities include:

- **Fearlessness:** The foremost quality. It comes from deep faith in the Supreme Lord as the ultimate protector.

- **Purification:** Cleanliness of body, mind, and soul. It requires transparency and the absence of conspiracy or malice.
- **Cultivation of Knowledge:** Engaging in the search for truth, realizing that nothing is separate from the Divine.
- **Charity:** Giving in the path of God for the welfare of all beings, not limited to a specific group.
- **Self-control:** Regulating the senses.
- **Sacrifice (Yajna):** Performing all actions for the satisfaction of the Lord without selfish motives.
- **Study of Scriptures:** Regular reading to strengthen spiritual intellect and remembrance.
- **Austerity:** Disciplining the body, mind, and speech to ensure they don't hinder spiritual progress.
- **Simplicity and Nonviolence:** Living a straightforward life and not obstructing the progress of any living entity.

These qualities act as a ladder to help a person realize the deepest mysteries of truth.

16.4-5 Commentary: Pride, conceit, and anger are the hallmarks of the demoniac. Such people use religious rituals merely as tools for social status. They are blinded by wealth and lack humility. Sri Krishna reassures Arjuna

that although he is fighting a war (which involves violence), he is doing so out of duty to oppose unrighteousness, not out of a demoniac mindset.

"Fight in the way of Allah... but begin not hostilities. Indeed! Allah loveth not aggressors." (Al-Quran 2:190)

Verse 16.6 O son of Pritha, in this world there are two kinds of created beings. One is called the divine and the other demoniac. I have already explained to you at length the divine qualities. Now hear from Me of the demoniac.

Verse 16.7 Those who are demoniac do not know what is to be done and what is not to be done. Neither cleanliness nor proper behavior nor truth is found in them.

Verse 16.8 They say that this world is unreal, with no foundation, no God in control. They say it is produced of sex desire and has no cause other than lust.

Verse 16.9 Following such conclusions, the demoniac, who are lost to themselves and who have no intelligence, engage in unbeneficial, horrible works meant to destroy the world.

Verse 16.10 Taking shelter of insatiable lust and absorbed in the conceit of pride and false prestige, the demoniac, thus illusioned, are always sworn to unclean work, attracted by the impermanent.

Verse 16.11-16 They believe that to enjoy the senses is the chief necessity of human civilization. Thus, until the end of life, their anxiety is measureless. Bound by a network of hundreds of thousands of desires and absorbed in lust and anger, they secure money by illegal means for sense gratification. The demoniac person thinks: "So much wealth do I have today, and I will gain more according to my schemes. So much is mine now, and it will increase in the future. That enemy has been killed by me, and my other enemies will also be killed. I am the lord of everything. I am the enjoyer. I am perfect, powerful, and happy. I am the richest man, surrounded by aristocratic relatives. There is none so powerful and happy as I am. I shall perform sacrifices, I shall give some charity, and thus I shall rejoice." In this way, such persons are deluded by ignorance, beset by a network of delusions and addicted to sense gratification, they fall down into a foul hell.

Verse 16.17 Self-complacent and always impudent, deluded by wealth and false prestige, they sometimes proudly perform sacrifices in name only, without following any rules or regulations.

Verse 16.18 Bewildered by false ego, strength, pride, lust, and anger, the demoniac becomes envious of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is situated in his

own body and in the bodies of others, and blasphemes against the real religion.

16.6-18 Commentary: The distinction is clear: the divine follow the law; the demoniac ignore it. The demoniac view the world as an accidental product of lust with no underlying truth or Creator. This nihilistic view leads them to act destructively. They accumulate wealth through exploitation and believe themselves to be "God" or the ultimate controllers.

"Woe to every slanderer and backbiter, who has gathered wealth and counted it. He thinks that his wealth will make him last forever! No! He will surely be thrown into the Crusher (Hutamah)." (Al-Quran 104:1-4)

Their arrogance leads to mock-piety, where they perform "rituals" only for show while harboring hatred for the Indwelling Lord (Paramatma) who resides in the hearts of those they oppress.

Verse 16.19 Those who are envious and mischievous, who are the lowest among men, I perpetually cast into the ocean of material existence, into various demoniac species of life.

Verse 16.20 Attaining repeated birth amongst the species of demoniac life, O son of Kunti, such persons can never approach Me. Gradually they sink down to the

most abominable type of existence.

16.19 Commentary: By the will of the Supreme Lord, the soul obtains a specific body. Those who are of a demoniac nature and envious of God receive results determined by Him according to their actions. The authority of judging a living being's deeds rests solely with God. As it is said:

"All praise is due to Allah... Master of the Day of Judgment." (Al-Quran 1:1-3)

Cruel and miscreant haters of God are repeatedly cast into demoniac wombs in this material world. In this way, they progress toward continuous degradation and attain a hellish life. As it is said:

"...And whoever turns away from the remembrance of his Lord, He will thrust him into a progressive punishment." (Al-Quran 72:17)

16.20 Commentary: Deprived of the mercy of the Supreme Lord, the demoniac continue to fall into even lower species than their previous births, such as animals, birds, insects, and worms. This is what is called hell. It is said:

"Indeed, Hell has been lying in wait, for the transgressors, a place of settlement [for those of demoniac mindsets]."

(Al-Quran 78:21-22)

It is further noted that to return to the human species from the lowest levels of existence, a soul must pass through millions of species. Scriptures mention that one must traverse 2 million non-moving forms (plants/trees), 9 hundred thousand aquatic forms, 9 hundred thousand reptilian forms, 1 million bird forms, 3 million animal forms, and 4 hundred thousand monkey species before attaining a human birth again. Only after this can one become eligible to achieve a divine life through righteous action.

Verse 16.21 There are three gates leading to this hell—lust, anger, and greed. Every sane man should give these up, for they lead to the degradation of the soul.

Verse 16.22 The man who has escaped these three gates of darkness, O son of Kunti, performs acts conducive to self-realization and thus gradually attains the supreme destination.

16.21-22 Commentary: In this world, people try to gratify lust, which arises from the mode of passion (Rajo-guna). When lust is unfulfilled, anger and greed are born in the heart. These three ignite the demoniac nature within, destroying one's conscience and judgment. Due to evil deeds, the living entity falls and causes self-harm.

Therefore, these three are called the "Gates of Hell." As it is said:

"Indeed, over My [believing] servants there is for you no authority, except those who follow you of the deviators. And indeed, Hell is the promised place for them all. It has seven gates; for every gate is of them a portion designated." (Al-Quran 15:42-44)

All demoniac assets fall under these three, which are born of the mode of ignorance (Tamo-guna). To be free from these, one must acquire spiritual knowledge, specifically the knowledge of the soul, and become situated in the mode of goodness (Sattva-guna).

Verse 16.23 But he who discards scriptural injunctions and acts according to his own whims attains neither perfection, nor happiness, nor the supreme destination.

Verse 16.24 One should understand what is duty and what is not duty by the regulations of the scriptures. Knowing such rules and regulations, one should act so that he may gradually be elevated.

16.23 Commentary: Scriptural laws are ordained by God and show the path to liberation. God never commands evil deeds. As it is said:

"Say, 'Indeed, Allah does not order immorality.' ... Say, 'My

Lord has ordered justice..."' (Al-Quran 7:28-29)

Following scriptural injunctions helps in acquiring divine qualities. However, if one is driven by endless desires and whims, they become bound. This bondage is the cause of all suffering, preventing happiness and the ultimate goal of liberation.

16.24 Commentary: Divine nature encourages a person to perform their duty. Even the demoniac perform "duties" based on their own judgment. So, what is true duty? Sri Krishna says that scripture is the only evidence for determining what should and should not be done.

Conditioned souls are often unfit to create perfect laws because they are driven by self-interest. Man-made laws are inherently flawed. In contrast, scripture is free from these defects because it is not man-made; it is the word of God. It considers equality, the welfare of all creation, and justice. As it is said:

"Indeed... the sun, the moon, and the stars are subjected by His command. Unquestionably, His is the creation and the command; blessed is Allah, Lord of the worlds." (Al-Quran 7:54)

When a person is confused about their duty, scriptures provide the path. Sri Krishna tells Arjuna that abandoning action is not the right choice. Staying in the world and

following scriptural law is the mark of the wise. Therefore, Arjuna must fight; as a warrior (Kshatriya), that is his scriptural duty.

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Chapter 17: Yoga through the Division of Threefold Faith and Omkara

(Total Verses: 28)

Summary: The faith or devotion of embodied souls varies according to their inner nature or temperament. Similarly, sacrifice (Yajna), charity (Dana), and penance (Tapasya) also differ based on the modes of nature (Gunas). These differences are categorized into three types: Sattvic (goodness), Rajasic (passion), and Tamasic (ignorance). Therefore, the goal is not to renounce action, but to perform it with proper knowledge. By understanding these subjects deeply, one can attain a life free from suffering or achieve liberation (Moksha). This chapter also highlights the necessity, importance, and logic of chanting "Om Tat Sat" or "Omkara" at the

beginning of all noble deeds.

Verses and Commentary

Verse 17.1 Arjuna said: O Krishna, what is the situation of those who do not follow the principles of scripture but worship according to their own faith? Is it in goodness, passion, or ignorance?

17.1 Commentary: Those endowed with divine qualities possess spiritual knowledge and follow scriptural injunctions. However, there are many people who do not necessarily have a lack of faith in scriptures or spiritual matters, yet they perform worship according to their own understanding with deep belief and devotion. Whether due to a lack of knowledge, laziness, or other reasons, they do not follow the specific rules of scripture. Arjuna wants to know the nature of such devotion—is it Sattvic, Rajasic, or Tamasic?

To attain liberation, one must rise above the three modes of nature. However, before rising above them, one must first cultivate the mode of goodness (Sattva). Arjuna seeks to clear his internal doubt: if someone worships God with devotion but without following scriptural rules, can they still attain liberation?

Verse 17.2 The Supreme Lord said: According to the modes of nature acquired by the embodied soul, one's faith can be of three kinds—in goodness, in passion, or in ignorance. Now hear about this.

Verse 17.3 O son of Bharata, according to one's existence under the various modes of nature, one evolves a particular kind of faith. The living being is said to be of a particular faith according to the modes he has acquired.

Verse 17.4 Men in the mode of goodness worship the demigods; those in the mode of passion worship the demons; and those in the mode of ignorance worship ghosts and spirits.

17.2 Commentary: In response to Arjuna's query, Sri Krishna explains that due to the differences in the three modes, the faith of embodied beings is of three types according to their nature: Sattvic, Rajasic, and Tamasic.

17.3 Commentary: Sri Krishna states that man is fundamentally a creature of faith. Every human respects or believes in someone or something. However, who or what they choose to respect depends on the inner tendencies of their heart. These tendencies are shaped by the impressions (Samskaras) gathered in previous births. Consequently, one's nature becomes Sattvic,

Rajasic, or Tamasic. A person moves toward whatever their heart is most devoted to.

Scriptural injunctions are the same for everyone. Therefore, when one follows these rules, even those in the modes of ignorance and passion are encouraged to follow the path of goodness. Scriptures promote gradual elevation. However, the scenario Arjuna describes occurs when one follows their own whims instead of scripture. When scriptural laws are ignored, one becomes attached to a specific mode, and if that mode is inferior, they cannot reach the stage of perfection or liberation. As it is said:

"Have you seen him who has taken his own desire as his god?... Who then will guide him after Allah? Will you not then be reminded?" (Al-Quran 45:23)

17.4 Commentary: Without following scriptures, people worship various things based on their innate desires. As discussed, those in the mode of goodness generally do not worship anything evil even without scriptural guidance; they worship demigods. Rajasic people worship powerful beings or demons from whom they expect benefit. Tamasic people naturally worship ghosts, spirits, or the tombs of the dead. As it is said:

"But there came after them successors who neglected

prayer and pursued desires; so they are going to meet evil." (Al-Quran 19:59)

Following scriptural laws is superior because it ensures the gradual elevation of the hearts of all, regardless of their current mode (Rajas or Tamas). According to scripture, God (Allah) is the only object of worship. When a person is situated in pure goodness (Shuddha-sattva), they worship only the One.

"And your god is one God. There is no deity [worthy of worship] except Him, the Entirely Merciful, the Especially Merciful." (Al-Quran 2:163)

"Allah witnesses that there is no deity except Him, and [so do] the angels and those of knowledge..." (Al-Quran 3:18)

Verses 17.5-6 Those who undergo severe austerities and penances not recommended in the scriptures, performing them out of pride and egotism, who are impelled by lust and attachment, who are foolish and who torture the material elements of the body as well as the Supersoul dwelling within—know them to be of demoniac nature.

17.5-6 Commentary: Scripture defines who and how to worship. Sri Krishna explains that some people are unaware of scriptural rules, while others ignore them intentionally to follow man-made, whimsical practices.

Accepting physical hardship for a cause is called penance (Tapasya). However, some mistakenly torture their own bodies in the name of severe penance, believing that enduring extreme pain proves their ultimate devotion and love for God. They imagine that God will be more pleased with them for this. They often feel a sense of competition, thinking they are more self-sacrificing than others, which leads to pride.

One must understand that within this body dwells the Supersoul (Paramatma).

"The Supreme Lord is situated in everyone's heart." (Bhagavad Gita 18:61)

"Allah comes between a man and his heart." (Al-Quran 8:24)

When the body is needlessly tortured through non-scriptural penance, the Supersoul within also suffers. Where there is no peace, the soul cannot be awakened in its true form. Such people are called "demoniac." In the Quranic context, they are "astray." They commit irrational violence against all, including themselves and the Divine within. Following scriptural guidance is always the better path.

Verse 17.7 Even the food each person prefers is of three kinds, according to the three modes of material nature.

The same is true of sacrifices, austerities and charity. Now hear of the distinction between them.

Verse 17.8 Foods in the mode of goodness increase the duration of life, purify one's existence and give strength, health, happiness and satisfaction. Such foods are juicy, fatty, wholesome, and pleasing to the heart.

Verse 17.9 Foods that are too bitter, too sour, salty, hot, pungent, dry and burning are dear to those in the mode of passion. Such foods cause distress, misery and disease.

Verse 17.10 Food prepared more than three hours before being eaten, food that is tasteless, decomposed and putrid, and food consisting of remnants and untouchable things is dear to those in the mode of ignorance.

17.7 Commentary: Sri Krishna explains that due to the three modes of nature, people find different things "pleasing." This applies even to food.

17.8-10 Commentary: Sattvic people prefer sweet, heart-satisfying foods. Rajasic people prefer bitter, sour, salty, and spicy foods, even if they cause illness. Tamasic food is that which is not fresh. While everyone finds their preferred food "tasty," the best food is that which is offered to God.

"So eat of that [meat] upon which the name of Allah has been mentioned..." (Al-Quran 6:118)

The purpose of food is to increase longevity, purify the mind, and give strength. A healthy body is essential for focusing on God.

"O mankind, eat from whatever is on earth [that is] lawful and good..." (Al-Quran 2:168)

Verse 17.11 Of sacrifices, the sacrifice performed according to the directions of scripture, as a matter of duty, by those who desire no reward, is of the nature of goodness.

Verse 17.12 But the sacrifice performed for some material benefit, or for the sake of pride, O chief of the Bharatas, you should know to be in the mode of passion.

Verse 17.13 Any sacrifice performed without regard for the directions of scripture, without distribution of prasadam [spiritual food], without chanting of Vedic hymns and remunerations to the priests, and without faith, is considered to be in the mode of ignorance.

17.11 Commentary: When people act, they usually expect a result. Sattvic people perform their work by taking shelter in God. They do not worry about who receives the fruits of the labor. They consider it their duty

to offer their work to God, knowing He distributes the results as He sees fit.

"And if Allah had extended [excessively] provision for His servants, they would have committed tyranny throughout the earth. But He sends [it] down in an amount which He wills." (Al-Quran 42:27)

17.12 Commentary: Conversely, sacrifices performed with the desire for reward or to show off pride are Rajasic. Such people seek prestige and material luster from others.

"Whoever desires the life of this world and its adornments - We fully repay them for their deeds therein... those are the ones for whom there is not in the Hereafter but the Fire." (Al-Quran 11:15-16)

Rajasic people are impatient; they want immediate results and become arrogant in success or despondent in failure.

17.13 Commentary: Sacrifices performed without following proper rules are Tamasic. They lack devotion and faith and cannot awaken the soul.

Verse 17.14 Austerity of the body consists in worship of the Supreme Lord, the Brahmanas, the spiritual master, and superiors like the father and mother, and in

cleanliness, simplicity, celibacy and nonviolence.

Verse 17.15 Austerity of speech consists in speaking words that are truthful, pleasing, beneficial, and not agitating to others, and also in regularly reciting Vedic literature.

Verse 17.16 And satisfaction, simplicity, gravity, self-control and purification of one's existence are the austerities of the mind.

17.14-16 Commentary: Three types of penance are described: Physical, Verbal, and Mental.

- **Physical:** Controlling the body so it doesn't run after every desire, and maintaining cleanliness and non-violence.
- **Verbal:** Speaking with restraint and kindness without hurting others.
  "And speak to people good [words]..." (Al-Quran 33:70)
  "Recite, [O Muhammad], what has been revealed to you of the Book..." (Al-Quran 18:27)
- **Mental:** Purifying the heart, thinking good thoughts, respecting others, and keeping the mind free from sense gratification. Thinking of the welfare of others and remaining absorbed in the thought of God are the highest forms of mental penance.

Verse 17.17 When these three kinds of penance are performed with sublime faith by men who do not expect material benefits but are engaged only for the sake of the Supreme, it is called penance in goodness.

Verse 17.18 Penance performed out of pride and for the sake of gaining respect, honor, and worship is said to be in the mode of passion. It is neither stable nor permanent.

Verse 17.19 Penance performed out of foolishness, with self-torture or to destroy or injure others, is said to be in the mode of ignorance.

17.17-19 Commentary: When the aforementioned physical, verbal, and mental penances are performed with great devotion and without any desire for personal gain, they are considered Sattvic (in goodness).

When such penances are done with the hope of gaining fame, honor, or being worshipped by others, they turn into Rajasic (in passion). The results of such actions are uncertain and, even if attained, are very short-lived.

Penances performed by torturing oneself or with the intent to harm others are Tamasic (in ignorance). These are irrational acts born of foolishness.

Verse 17.20 Charity given out of duty, without expectation of return, at the proper time and place, and

to a worthy person is considered to be in the mode of goodness.

Verse 17.21 But charity performed with the expectation of some return, or with a desire for fruitive results, or in a grudging mood, is said to be charity in the mode of passion.

Verse 17.22 And charity performed at an impure place, at an unproper time, to unworthy persons, or without proper attention and respect is said to be in the mode of ignorance.

17.20 Commentary: Giving because it is a duty, without expecting anything in return, and choosing the right time, place, and recipient constitutes Sattvic charity. Here are some references regarding charity:

"The example of those who spend their wealth in the way of Allah... only to seek the approval of Allah and to strengthen their souls... is like a garden on a high ground... it yields its fruit twofold." (Al-Quran 2:265)

"As for he who gives and fears Allah and believes in the best [reward], We will ease him toward ease." (Al-Quran 92:5-7)

"O you who have believed, spend from the good things which you have earned... and do not aim toward the

defective therefrom, spending [from that] while you would not take it [yourselves]..." (Al-Quran 2:267)

One must ensure the recipient is worthy of the charity. As it is said:

"[Charity is] for the poor who have been restricted for the cause of Allah, unable to move about in the land [for trade or work]..." (Al-Quran 2:273)

"Zakat expenditures are only for the poor and for the needy and for those employed to collect [zakat] and for bringing hearts together [for Islam] and for freeing captives [or slaves] and for those in debt and for the cause of Allah and for the [stranded] traveler..." (Al-Quran 9:60)

17.21 Commentary: Charity given with the expectation of a favor or return, or given reluctantly or for show, is Rajasic. This should be avoided.

"O you who have believed, do not invalidate your charities with reminders [of your generosity] or injury as does one who spends his wealth [only] to be seen by the people..." (Al-Quran 2:264)

17.22 Commentary: Charity given to an unworthy cause or person, devoid of knowledge or performed with disrespect, is Tamasic. This too should be avoided.

Ultimately, all acts—faith, devotion, sacrifice, charity, and penance—must be directed toward God. Abandoning ego and ignorance is the true teaching.

Verse 17.23 From the beginning of creation, the three words Om Tat Sat were used to indicate the Supreme Absolute Truth. These three symbolic representations were used by Brahmanas while chanting the hymns of the Vedas and during sacrifices for the satisfaction of the Supreme.

Verse 17.24 Therefore, transcendentalists undertaking performances of sacrifice, charity, and penance in accordance with scriptural regulations begin always with 'Om,' to attain the Supreme.

Verse 17.25 Without desiring fruitive results, one should perform various kinds of sacrifice, penance, and charity with the word 'Tat.' The purpose of such transcendental activities is to get free from material entanglement.

Verse 17.26 The Absolute Truth is the objective of devotional sacrifice, and it is indicated by the word 'Sat.' The performer of such sacrifice is also called 'Sat,' as are all works of sacrifice, penance, and charity which, true to the absolute nature, are performed to please the Supreme Person, O son of Pritha.

Verse 17.27 All works of sacrifice, charity, and penance,

which are performed as a matter of duty, are called 'Sat.' Therefore, the person performing them is also called 'Sat.'

Verse 17.28 Anything done as sacrifice, charity, or penance without faith in the Supreme, O son of Pritha, is impermanent. It is called 'Asat' and is useless both in this life and the next.

17.23 Commentary: The words Om Tat Sat can be used individually or together. They all indicate the Supreme Brahman. These "Sound-Brahmans" are the root of creation. A word is a command.

"[He is] Originator of the heavens and the earth. When He decrees a matter, He only says to it, 'Be,' and it is." (Al-Quran 2:117)

Everything originated from this Omkara or Sound-Brahman. This sound initiated action (Yajna), which keeps the world moving. Hence, it is said "the all-pervading Brahman is eternally situated in sacrifice" (Gita 3:15).

17.24 Commentary: Starting an act with 'Om' signifies it is for God. Muslims similarly start with "In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful." The inner meaning is identical; only the outward sounds differ.

17.25 Commentary: Those seeking liberation use 'Tat' to

indicate they have no desire for the fruits of their labor. This is selfless action (Nishkama Karma). It is similar to the concept of Niyyat (intention) in Islam. 'Tat' means "You (the goal)!"

17.26-27 Commentary: 'Sat' is used to indicate that an action is performed with honesty and noble intent. Any work done for the realization of the Supreme Soul is 'Sat.' These symbolic words help the believer stay firm in their righteous intentions.

17.28 Commentary: All work should be for God. If there is no faith or devotion, any sacrifice or charity becomes mere "show" or advertisement for one's own ego. Such acts are Asat (untruth/temporary). They provide no benefit in this world or the hereafter.

The teaching is to perform every action for the sake of God. Surrendering to God is the only chosen religion for all mankind.

"And whoever desires other than Islam [submission to God] as religion - never will it be accepted from him, and he, in the Hereafter, will be among the losers." (Al-Quran 3:85)

Chapter 18: Yoga through Liberation and Renunciation

(Total Verses: 78)

Summary: In this chapter, it is advised to abandon various complexities of religion and simply surrender oneself to God. This is the supreme instruction of the text and the only chosen, designated, and acceptable religion for all people in the world. Liberation lies in this. Depending on time, place, and person, this surrender as a religion is known by various names.

Verses and Commentary

Verse 18.1 Arjuna said: O mighty-armed one, I wish to

understand the purpose of renunciation (Sannyasa) and of the detached state of life (Tyaga), O killer of the Keshi demon, master of the senses.

[Note: Sri Krishna is addressed here as Mahabahu (mighty-armed), Hrishikesha, and Keshi-nishudana. Hrishikesha is the master of all senses, who helps in attaining mental peace. Keshi was a formidable demon of horse-like nature whom Sri Krishna killed in his Vrindavan pastimes; hence the name Keshi-nishudana. Mahabahu refers to one whose arms possess great power.]

18.1 Commentary: In human life, there are four stages of spiritual order (Ashramas): Brahmacharya, Grihastha, Vanaprastha, and Sannyasa. Performing sacrifices (Yajnas) requires significant wealth; thus, such ceremonies are most suitable for householders (Grihasthas). In the stages of student life, retired life, and renunciation, individuals typically do not possess personal wealth and must live on alms.

Instead of fighting the devastating war at Kurukshetra, Arjuna wished to live on alms. By "living on alms," he did not mean the life of a beggar, but rather choosing the life of a Sannyasi. Sannyasa is the fourth stage of life involving the renunciation of worldly activities. The purpose of the four Ashramas is to help a person become a complete yogi, progressing step-by-step in spiritual

life. It is said that one should not remain in householder life forever.

In common parlance, Sannyasa means the renunciation of all work. There is a prevailing idea in society that liberation cannot be achieved without Sannyasa. However, the Gita does not explicitly state this for liberation; instead, it emphasizes the renunciation of the fruits of action. Arjuna, therefore, expresses a keen interest in learning the true distinction between Sannyasa and Tyaga. Sri Krishna replies:

Verse 18.2 The Supreme Lord said: The giving up of activities that are based on material desire is what great learned men call the renounced order of life (Sannyasa). And giving up the results of all activities is what the wise call renunciation (Tyaga).

Verse 18.3 Some learned men declare that all kinds of fruitive activities should be abandoned as faulty, but there are other sages who maintain that acts of sacrifice, charity, and penance should never be abandoned.

18.2-3 Commentary: Performing sacrifices and rituals following Vedic traditions out of material desires are called Kamya-karma (fruitive activities). These result in the attainment of heaven or the fulfillment of worldly wishes. Sages call the abandonment of these Vedic

fruitive activities Sannyasa. However, the truth is that even if fruitive activities are abandoned, material desires may remain in the mind. Thus, the true purpose of renunciation is not achieved.

Therefore, the wise call the renunciation of the desire for the fruits of all actions—even while performing them—as true Tyaga. Thus, one who renounces the desire for results is a true Sannyasi, even while working. Sri Krishna corrects the common misconception about renunciation: selfless action is Sannyasa, and a Karma-yogi is a true Sannyasi.

One group of thinkers, specifically the Sankhyaites, claim that all work is faulty because every action involves some flaw or injury. Therefore, to remain pure, one must abandon all work. But another group, the Mimamsakas, argues that acts like sacrifice, charity, and penance should never be abandoned. Sri Krishna says:

Verse 18.4 O best of the Bharatas, now hear My judgment about renunciation. O tiger among men, renunciation is declared in the scriptures to be of three kinds.

Verse 18.5 Acts of sacrifice, charity, and penance are not to be given up; they must be performed. Indeed, sacrifice, charity, and penance purify even the great

souls.

Verse 18.6 All these activities should be performed without attachment or any expectation of result. They should be performed as a matter of duty, O son of Pritha. That is My final opinion.

18.4-5 Commentary: Sri Krishna explains that renunciation is of three kinds: renouncing fruitive work, renouncing the fruits of work, and renouncing all work due to perceived flaws.

Krishna's definitive view is that sacrifice, charity, and penance must never be abandoned. These acts purify the hearts of even the great sages and bring about spiritual welfare. In reality, these actions play a positive role in both individual and social life, such as serving the distressed and the poor. Actions performed for the welfare of the world should never be renounced. As it is said:

"If you disclose your charitable expenditures, they are good; but if you conceal them and give them to the poor, it is better for you, and He will remove from you some of your misdeeds. And Allah, with what you do, is fully Acquainted." (Al-Quran 2:271)

"So fear Allah as much as you are able and listen and obey and spend [in the way of Allah]; it is better for your

selves." (Al-Quran 64:16)

"...For those who do good in this world is good, and the earth of Allah is spacious." (Al-Quran 39:10)

18.6 Commentary: According to Krishna, even for a renunciant, these acts are not to be discarded. They must be done without any internal desire for reward or exchange, purely as a duty.

"But monasticism, they innovated it; We did not prescribe it for them except [that they did it] only to seek the pleasure of Allah. But they did not observe it with due observance." (Al-Quran 57:27)

Therefore, any work that purifies the heart and aids in spiritual and social progress should be continued. As it is said:

"O you who have believed, fear Allah and seek the means [of nearness] to Him and strive in His cause that you may succeed." (Al-Quran 5:35)

How does one perform their duty toward God? By working without attachment to the results. Performing duty for the welfare of creation, surrendering the fruits to God, reflects true sincerity and nearness to the Divine. This type of renunciation is the highest form of spiritual discipline. Sri Krishna continues:

Verse 18.7 Prescribed duties should never be renounced. If one renounces his prescribed duties because of illusion, such renunciation is said to be in the mode of ignorance.

Verse 18.8 Anyone who abandons prescribed duties as troublesome or out of fear of physical discomfort is said to have renounced in the mode of passion. Such action never elevates one to the fruits of renunciation.

Verse 18.9 O Arjuna, when one performs his prescribed duty only because it ought to be done, and renounces all material association and all attachment to the fruit, his renunciation is said to be in the mode of goodness.

18.7 Commentary: Every action a human performs is influenced by one of the three modes: Sattva, Rajas, or Tamas. Consequently, renunciation also falls into these three categories. Renouncing one's prescribed duty (Svadharma) due to confusion or illusion is Tamasic. Such renunciation has no social or spiritual value and leads to loss. Arjuna's initial desire to leave the battlefield was an example of Tamasic renunciation.

18.8 Commentary: If someone leaves their work because it is painful or physically demanding, that is Rajasic renunciation. Such a person does not gain the "fruit" of renunciation—which is supreme peace and

liberation.

18.9 Commentary: When one performs duty as prescribed by scripture, without attachment and without desiring the result, that is true Sattvic renunciation. This leads to liberation. In this state, the fruits of work are surrendered to God.

"To Allah belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth. And We have instructed those who were given the Scripture before you and yourselves to fear Allah." (Al-Quran 4:131)

Verse 18.10 The intelligent renouncer situated in the mode of goodness, neither affected by the three modes of material nature nor doubting, has no aversion to unpleasant work nor is he attached to pleasant work.

Verse 18.11 It is indeed impossible for an embodied being to give up all activities entirely. But he who renounces the fruits of action is called a true renouncer.

Verse 18.12 For one who is not renounced, the threefold fruits of action—desirable, undesirable, and mixed—accrue after death. But such fruits never accrue to those in the renounced order of life.

18.10 Commentary: A Sattvic renouncer is called "intelligent" and "free from doubt" because they possess

deep knowledge of life and the universe. They work for the greater good, viewing it as a duty rather than a means for sense gratification. They are steady in heart whether the work is difficult or pleasant.

18.11 Commentary: No human can be truly inactive. Even when appearing still, the brain is working; even in sleep, one is active. Nature's modes force everyone to act. Therefore, a "renouncer" is not someone who stops working, but someone who renounces the fruits of work. Renouncing results requires a higher inspiration—the Supreme Lord.

"Indeed, those who have believed and done righteous deeds - for them are the Gardens of Pleasure." (Al-Quran 92:17-21)

18.12 Commentary: Those who work for material results must experience the consequences—good, bad, or mixed—both in this life and the next. However, true Sannyasis (renouncers of the fruit) do not suffer these consequences. Since they work selflessly for the welfare of creation and for God, they remain above the flaws of the action. If a selfless act leads to an unintended bad result, society and God do not blame the doer because the intention (Niyyat) was pure. This state of ultimate excellence is called Taqwa (God-consciousness).

"Indeed, the righteous will be among gardens and bliss." (Al-Quran 52:17)

Verse 18.13 O mighty-armed Arjuna, according to the Vedanta, there are five causes for the accomplishment of all action. Now learn of these from Me.

Verse 18.14 The place of action (the body), the performer, the various senses, the many different kinds of endeavor, and ultimately the Supersoul—these are the five factors of action.

Verse 18.15 Whatever right or wrong action a man performs by body, mind, or speech is caused by these five factors.

Verse 18.16 Therefore, one who thinks himself the only doer, not considering these five factors, is certainly not very intelligent and cannot see things as they are.

Verse 18.17 One who is not motivated by false ego, whose intelligence is not entangled, though he kills men in this world, does not kill, nor is he bound by his actions.

18.13-16 Commentary: Every action requires the involvement of five factors. This is the conclusion of Sankhya or Vedanta philosophy. The five factors are:

1. **The Place (Adhishthanam):** A location is needed for any act. The body is the primary seat or place where action

occurs.

2. **The Doer (Karta):** This is the self or the soul that initiates the work and creates the results.
3. **The Instrument (Karanam):** These are the tools or means of action, such as the various senses through which the living entity functions.
4. **The Endeavor (Cesta):** Various types of effort or exertion put forth by the doer.
5. **Providence (Daivam):** This refers to the Supreme Lord (Paramatma), who is the ultimate source of power and sanction. Everything depends on the will of the Supreme.

   As stated in various contexts:

   "And Allah had guided you if He had willed." (Al-Quran 6:149)

   "Say, 'I possess not for myself any benefit or harm except what Allah should will...'" (Al-Quran 7:188)

   "Indeed, Allah does what He intends." (Al-Quran 22:14)

   "...But Allah guides whom He wills." (Al-Quran 28:56)

   No action is accomplished without the will of God. While the first four factors (field, doer, effort, senses) are material causes, the fifth—the Supreme—is the ultimate

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cause. One who ignores this fifth factor and considers themselves the sole master of their actions lacks true vision. As it has been said:

"Say: ... Who conducts all affairs and management?" (Al-Quran 10:31)

It is also said:

"He conducts every affair from the heavens to the earth." (Al-Quran 32:5)

18.17 Commentary: One who is not driven by greed or selfishness, who is free from the false ego of "I-ness," and whose intelligence is not attached to the fruits of action, is not bound by the consequences of their deeds. Such a person surrenders to the Supreme and acts as an instrument of the Divine will. Even if such a person performs a difficult act, like killing in a righteous war, they do not incur the sin of murder because the act is performed without personal interest and under Divine direction.

"And you did not kill them, but it was Allah who killed them." (Al-Quran 8:17)

This refers only to actions performed for the sake of God and for the greater welfare of creation, not to arbitrary or unjustified violence. When ego is absent and one is

surrendered, the soul remains a non-doer (Akarta), detached from the body's actions.

Verse 18.18 Knowledge, the object of knowledge, and the knower are the three factors that motivate action; the senses, the work, and the doer are the three constituents of action.

Verse 18.19 According to the three different modes of material nature, there are three kinds of knowledge, action, and performer of action. Now hear of them from Me.

18.18-19 Commentary: Action is initiated by "Knowledge" (the understanding), the "Object of Knowledge" (the goal), and the "Knower" (the one who perceives the goal). Once the motivation exists, the actual performance involves the senses (instruments), the work itself, and the doer.

Sri Krishna explains that these elements—knowledge, action, and the doer—are categorized by the three modes of nature: Sattva (goodness), Rajas (passion), and Tamas (ignorance).

Verse 18.20 That knowledge by which one undivided spiritual nature is seen in all living entities, though they are divided into innumerable forms, you should understand to be in the mode of goodness.

Verse 18.21 That knowledge by which one sees that in every different body there is a different type of living entity you should understand to be in the mode of passion.

Verse 18.22 And that knowledge by which one is attached to one kind of work as the all-in-all, without knowledge of the truth, and which is very meager, is said to be in the mode of ignorance.

18.20-22 Commentary: * Sattvic Knowledge: Seeing the "One" in the many. Realizing that the Supreme essence pervades everything and that God is One.

- **Rajasic Knowledge:** Seeing every living being as separate and disconnected. Believing that consciousness ends with the death of the individual body and that there is no overarching spiritual connection. This leads to ego and selfish desire.
- **Tamasic Knowledge:** Being blindly attached to one small thing or one body as if it were the whole truth. It is irrational and lacks a scriptural basis—for example, treating a single object or person as the absolute God without understanding the universal truth.

Verse 18.23 Action which is regulated and which is performed without attachment, without love or hatred, and without desire for fruitive results is said to be in the

mode of goodness.

Verse 18.24 But action performed with great effort by one seeking to gratify his desires, and enacted from a sense of false ego, is called action in the mode of passion.

Verse 18.25 That action performed in illusion, in disregard of scriptural injunctions, and without concern for future bondage or for violence or distress caused to others is said to be in the mode of ignorance.

18.23-25 Commentary: * Sattvic Action: Performed as a duty, without attachment, and for the satisfaction of the Supreme. It is free from the biases of like and dislike.

- **Rajasic Action:** Performed with much ego, pride, and enormous struggle to achieve personal desires.
- **Tamasic Action:** Performed impulsively without considering one's own ability, the consequences, or the harm it might cause to others. It is destructive and irresponsible.

Verse 18.26 The worker who is free from all material attachments and false ego, who is enthusiastic and resolute and who is indifferent to success or failure, is called a worker in the mode of goodness.

Verse 18.27 The worker who is attached to work and the fruits of work, desiring to enjoy those fruits, and who is

greedy, always envious, impure, and moved by joy and sorrow, is said to be in the mode of passion.

Verse 18.28 The worker who is always engaged in work against the injunctions of the scripture, who is materialistic, obstinate, cheating, and expert in insulting others, and who is lazy, always morose, and procrastinating is said to be in the mode of ignorance.

18.26-28 Commentary: * Sattvic Doer: A Karma-yogi who is disciplined, free from ego, and steady in success or failure.

- **Rajasic Doer:** One who is overly attached to the results, greedy, and emotionally unstable—swinging between extreme joy and deep depression based on outcomes.
- **Tamasic Doer:** One who is lazy, deceitful, disrespectful, and lacks a sense of what is right or wrong.

Verse 18.29 O winner of wealth, now please listen as I tell you in detail of the different kinds of understanding and determination, according to the three modes of material nature.

Verse 18.30 O son of Pritha, that understanding by which one knows what ought to be done and what ought not to be done, what is to be feared and what is not to be feared, what is binding and what is liberating, is in the

mode of goodness.

Verse 18.31 O son of Pritha, that understanding which cannot distinguish between religion and irreligion, between action that should be done and action that should not be done, is in the mode of passion.

Verse 18.32 That understanding which considers irreligion to be religion and religion to be irreligion, under the spell of illusion and darkness, and strives always in the wrong direction, O Partha, is in the mode of ignorance.

18.29-32 Commentary: Intelligence (Buddhi) is also categorized by the modes. Sattvic intelligence correctly identifies the path toward liberation and duty. Rajasic intelligence is confused and cannot clearly distinguish right from wrong. Tamasic intelligence is completely inverted—it sees the wrong path as right and stays shrouded in ignorance.

Verse 18.33 O son of Pritha, that determination which is unbreakable, which is sustained with steadfastness by yoga practice, and which thus controls the activities of the mind, life, and senses is determination in the mode of goodness.

Verse 18.34 But that determination by which one holds fast to fruitive results in religion, economic development, and sense gratification is of the nature of passion, O

Arjuna.

Verse 18.35 And that determination which cannot go beyond dreaming, fearfulness, lamentation, moroseness, and illusion—such unintelligent determination, O son of Pritha, is in the mode of ignorance.

18.33-35 Commentary: Yoga is the means of connecting with the Supersoul. Determination (Dhriti) in the mode of goodness is that mental strength and steadfastness which keeps the mind, life-breath, and senses unswervingly fixed on God. In contrast, Rajasic determination is driven by the desire for results in worldly pursuits like wealth and pleasure. Tamasic determination is characterized by a stubborn attachment to negative states like sleep, fear, and grief, preventing any spiritual progress.

Verse 18.36 O best of the Bharatas, now please hear from Me about the three kinds of happiness by which the conditioned soul enjoys, and by which one sometimes comes to the end of all miseries.

Verse 18.37 That which in the beginning may be just like poison but at the end is just like nectar and which awakens one to self-realization is said to be happiness in the mode of goodness.

Verse 18.38 That happiness which is derived from

contact of the senses with their objects and which appears like nectar at first but poison at the end is said to be of the nature of passion.

Verse 18.39 And that happiness which is blind to self-realization, which is delusional from beginning to end and which arises from sleep, laziness, and illusion is said to be of the nature of ignorance.

Verse 18.40 There is no being existing, either here or among the demigods in the higher planetary systems, which is freed from these three modes born of material nature.

18.36-40 Commentary: Everything in the universe, from the creator Brahma down to the smallest insect, is influenced by the three modes.

- **Sattvic Happiness:** Requires initial struggle and discipline (like poison), but leads to eternal peace and self-realization (like nectar).
- **Rajasic Happiness:** Comes from instant sense gratification (like nectar), but inevitably leads to suffering, disease, or disappointment (like poison).
- **Tamasic Happiness:** Derived from neglect, sleep, and intoxication. It is deceptive from the start and offers no real growth.

Verse 18.41 Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas, and Shudras are distinguished by the qualities born of their own natures in accordance with the material modes, O chastiser of the enemy.

Verse 18.42 Peacefulness, self-control, austerity, purity, tolerance, honesty, knowledge, wisdom, and religiousness—these are the natural qualities by which the Brahmins work.

Verse 18.43 Heroism, power, determination, resourcefulness, courage in battle, generosity, and leadership are the natural qualities of work for the Kshatriyas.

Verse 18.44 Farming, cow protection, and business are the natural work for the Vaishyas, and for the Shudras, there is service and work for others.

18.41-44 Commentary: This division is based on Guna (quality) and Karma (action), not birth. It is a "Division of Labor" designed for social harmony and spiritual growth. As the Quran mentions:

"Your Lord knows that you stand [in prayer]... and a group of those with you. And Allah determines the night and the day... He has known that there will be among you those who are ill and others traveling throughout the land seeking [something] of the bounty of Allah and others

fighting for the cause of Allah." (Al-Quran 73:20)

True "varna" is about one's natural inclination. A person born in a Brahmin family but acting deceitfully is not a Brahmin, while a person of service-oriented background who attains wisdom can reach the highest stage.

"Say, 'We have taken the color (religion) of Allah, and who is better than Allah in color? And we are worshippers of Him.'" (Al-Quran 2:138)

Verse 18.45 By following his qualities of work, every man can become perfect. Now please hear from Me how this can be done.

Verse 18.46 By adoration of the Lord, who is the source of all beings and who is all-pervading, a man can attain perfection through performing his own work.

18.45-46 Commentary: Perfection is attained when work is treated as worship (Ibada). God is the source of all activity and pervades the entire universe. Therefore, every profession—whether a teacher, a soldier, a merchant, or a laborer—is a way to serve the Divine if done with the right intent.

"The good word rises to Him, and the righteous deed lifts it..." (Al-Quran 35:10)

Work is the practical application of worship. Prayer in a

mosque or temple prepares the mind, but the actual "service" happens through one's duty in the world. Arjuna, being a warrior, attains God by fighting for justice, just as a scholar attains God through truth.

"Righteousness is not that you turn your faces toward the east or the west... but [true] righteousness is [in] one who believes in Allah... and gives wealth, in spite of love for it, to relatives, orphans, the needy... and [those who] are patient in poverty and hardship and during battle." (Al-Quran 2:177)

Even the universe itself serves God's purpose through its natural laws:

"And to Allah bows in prostration whoever is in the heavens and the earth, willingly or by compulsion..." (Al-Quran 13:15)

Verse 18.47 It is far better to perform one’s own prescribed duty, even though faultily, than another’s duty perfectly. Destruction in the course of performing one’s own duty is better than engaging in another’s, for to follow another’s path is dangerous.

Verse 18.48 Every endeavor is covered by some fault, just as fire is covered by smoke. Therefore, one should not give up the work born of his nature, O son of Kunti, even if such work is full of fault.

18.47-48 Commentary: Arjuna, a warrior by nature, wanted to abandon his duty and adopt the life of a renunciant (Sannyas). Sri Krishna explains that every profession has inherent flaws—just as fire naturally produces smoke. However, one's natural work (Swadharma) is the place where their maximum skill and inclination lie. Performing work that suits one's nature is psychologically sustainable and socially effective. Even if such work involves unpleasant aspects (like a soldier having to fight), it does not incur sin when performed as a duty without ego. Conversely, adopting another's path—even if it seems "holier"—is dangerous because it is artificial and lacks the depth of natural aptitude.

Verse 18.49 One who is self-controlled and unattached and who disregards all material enjoyments can obtain, through the practice of renunciation, the highest perfect stage of freedom from reaction.

Verse 18.50 O son of Kunti, learn from Me in brief how one who has achieved this perfection can attain to the supreme perfectional stage, Brahman, the stage of highest knowledge.

18.49-50 Commentary: True renunciation is not about giving up work, but about giving up the attachment to the results of work. This state is called Naishkarmya (freedom from reaction). In this state, even while acting, one is

mentally "actionless" because they are not bound by the consequences. This is the gateway to the Brahman stage—the highest realization of truth and the ultimate goal of human life.

Verses 18.51–53 Being purified by his intelligence and controlling the mind with determination, giving up the objects of sense gratification, being freed from attachment and hatred, one who lives in a secluded place, who eats little, who controls his body, mind and power of speech, who is always in trance and who is detached, free from false ego, false strength, false pride, lust, anger, and acceptance of material things, such a person is certainly elevated to the position of self-realization.

18.51-53 Commentary: To reach the Brahman stage, one must master their internal environment. This involves "internal renunciation" (overcoming ego, lust, and anger) and "external discipline" (moderation in food, speech, and sensory intake). When the mind becomes quiet and the ego dissolves, the seeker becomes capable of experiencing the Divine presence within.

Verse 18.54 One who is thus transcendentally situated at once realizes the Supreme Brahman and becomes fully joyful. He never laments or desires to have anything. He is equally disposed toward every living entity. In that state

he attains pure devotional service unto Me.

18.54 Commentary: Upon reaching the Brahman stage, a person becomes Prasannatma (a joyful soul). They no longer grieve over losses or crave gains. They see the same Divine spark in all beings, regardless of their social status or appearance. This universal vision is the highest stage of equality and leads to absolute devotion (Bhakti) toward the Supreme.

Verse 18.55 One can understand Me as I am, as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, only by devotional service. And when one is in full consciousness of Me by such devotion, he can enter into the kingdom of God.

Verse 18.56 Though engaged in all kinds of activities, My pure devotee, under My protection, reaches the eternal and imperishable abode by My grace.

18.55-56 Commentary: God is hidden by Yoga-maya (Divine energy) and cannot be reached by mere scholarship or logic alone.

"It is not for any human being that Allah should speak to him except by revelation or from behind a partition..." (**Al-Quran 42:51**)

Only through love and surrender does God grant the intelligence to understand His true nature.

"Those who have believed and taken refuge in Him... He will admit them to mercy from Himself and bounty and guide them to Himself on a straight path." (Al-Quran 4:175)

"To those who are constantly devoted and worship Me with love, I give the understanding by which they can come to Me." (Gita 10:10)

A true devotee acts in the world but remains mentally anchored in God. By Divine grace (Kripa), they achieve the eternal state that never perishes.

Verse 18.57 In all activities just depend upon Me and work always under My protection. In such devotional service, be fully conscious of Me.

Verse 18.58 If you become conscious of Me, you will pass over all the obstacles of conditioned life by My grace. If, however, you do not work in such consciousness but act through false ego, not hearing Me, you will be lost.

18.57-58 Commentary: The ultimate strategy for life is surrender (Sharanagati). Depending on God removes fear and provides the courage to face any crisis.

"And when you have decided, then rely upon Allah. Indeed, Allah loves those who rely [upon Him]." (Al-Quran 3:159)

Surrender means acting for God's sake, not for the self. This is the essence of Yajna (sacrifice).

"O believers... do not die except as those who have surrendered to Allah." (Al-Quran 3:102)

God resides within the heart:

"Allah is between a man and his heart." (Al-Quran 8:24)

"The Supreme Lord is situated in everyone's heart." (Gita 18:61)

Surrender is not a blind act; it must be done with intelligence. One must learn to distinguish between the "Divine voice" of the heart (which leads to goodness) and the "Egoic voice" (which leads to destruction).

"Evil and good are not equal, even if the abundance of evil attracts you." (Al-Quran 5:100)

Through Yoga and knowledge, one purifies the heart so they can clearly hear the Divine guidance. If one ignores this guidance due to pride, they fail.

"The soul is its own friend and its own enemy." (Gita 6:5)

Verse 18.59 If you think, "I will not fight," out of false ego, your determination is vain. Your very nature will compel you to act.

Verse 18.60 O son of Kunti, under the influence of illusion, you are now refusing to act according to My direction. But, bound by the work born of your own nature, you will be forced to act.

18.59-60 Commentary: Most people act with the mindset of "I am the doer." However, deeper knowledge reveals that one's internal nature (Swabhava) acts like an automatic machine, impelling the body to perform certain tasks. Arjuna's refusal to fight was born of temporary delusion and a misunderstanding of his own identity. Krishna explains that even if Arjuna tries to quit, his inherent warrior nature (Kshatriya traits) will eventually take over when he sees the injustice on the battlefield. God, through His creative energy (Maya), controls all things.

Verse 18.61 The Supreme Lord is situated in everyone's heart, O Arjuna, and is directing the wanderings of all living entities, who are seated as on a machine made of material energy.

Verse 18.62 O scion of Bharata, surrender unto Him utterly. By His grace you will attain transcendental peace and the supreme and eternal abode.

18.61-62 Commentary: The body is a mechanical vehicle (Yantra) made of matter. The Supreme Lord resides in the

heart of every being as the Inner Witness. While the individual soul thinks it is independent, it is actually under the control of the Divine.

"There is no creature moving on the earth but its sustenance is dependent on Allah..." (Al-Quran 11:56)

To find freedom, one must realize the distinction between the "Machine" (body) and the "Operator" (Soul/God). Surrendering the ego allows the individual to stop struggling against the gears of material nature and find eternal peace. This surrender must be based on true knowledge—realizing that the "I" is not the body.

"Whoever submits his whole self to Allah and is a doer of good has his reward with his Lord." (Al-Quran 2:112)

Verse 18.63 Thus I have explained to you knowledge still more confidential. Deliberate on this fully, and then do what you wish to do.

Verse 18.64 Because you are My very dear friend, I am speaking to you My supreme instruction, the most confidential knowledge of all. Hear this from Me, for it is for your benefit.

Verse 18.65 Always think of Me, become My devotee, worship Me and offer your homage unto Me. Thus you will come to Me without fail. I promise you this because

you are My very dear friend.

Verse 18.66 Abandon all varieties of religion and just surrender unto Me. I shall deliver you from all sinful reactions. Do not fear.

18.63-66 Commentary: Krishna has shared gradual levels of knowledge: the "Confidential" (Knowledge of the Soul), the "More Confidential" (Knowledge of the Supersoul), and now the "Most Confidential" (Total Surrender to the Supreme). He does not force Arjuna; He tells him to deliberate and then choose.

"I have only been sent to you as a giver of glad tidings and a warner... let him who will, take a way to his Lord." (Al-Quran 25:56-57)

The ultimate teaching of the Gita—and all scriptures—is to center the mind on the Divine.

"O believers! Bow down, prostrate yourselves, and worship your Lord and do good that you may succeed." (Al-Quran 22:77)

Verse 66 is the "Sovereign Command": stop worrying about complex rituals, social dogmas, or the fear of sin. By surrendering to God's will, all previous "debts" or sins are washed away by His grace. This is the path of absolute peace.

"Indeed, the religion in the sight of Allah is Islam [Surrender]." (Al-Quran 3:19)

Verse 18.67 This confidential knowledge may never be explained to those who are not austere, or devoted, or engaged in devotional service, nor to one who is envious of Me.

Verse 18.68 For one who explains this supreme secret to the devotees, pure devotional service is guaranteed, and at the end he will come back to Me.

Verse 18.69 There is no servant in this world more dear to Me than he, nor will there ever be one more dear.

Verse 18.70 And I declare that he who studies this sacred conversation of ours worships Me by his intelligence.

Verse 18.71 And one who listens with faith and without envy becomes free from sinful reactions and attains to the auspicious planets where the pious dwell.

18.67-71 Commentary: Krishna sets a guardrail: this profound knowledge is not for the cynical or the hateful, as they will only misuse it or mock it. However, those who share this light with others are God's most beloved servants. Studying this dialogue is considered "Jnana-Yajna" (the Sacrifice of Knowledge). Even just listening with an open heart brings spiritual merit and elevation.

"Allah will exalt those of you who believe and those who have been granted knowledge to high ranks." (Al-Quran 58:11)

Verse 18.72 O son of Pritha, O conqueror of wealth, have you heard this with attentive mind? And is your ignorance and illusion now dispelled?

Verse 18.73 Arjuna said: My dear Krishna, O infallible one, my illusion is now gone. I have regained my memory by Your grace. I am now firm and free from doubt and am prepared to act according to Your instructions.

18.72-73 Commentary: The "Gita" achieves its purpose. Arjuna, who began the book in a state of collapse and tears, is now standing firm. He has regained his "memory"—not of facts, but of his true spiritual identity and duty. He realizes he is an instrument of the Divine.

Verse 18.74 Sanjaya said: Thus have I heard the conversation of two great souls, Krishna and Arjuna. And so wonderful is that message that my hair is standing on end.

Verse 18.75 By the mercy of Vyasa, I have heard these most confidential talks directly from the master of all mysticism, Krishna, who was speaking personally to Arjuna.

Verse 18.76 O King, as I repeatedly recall this amazing and holy dialogue between Krishna and Arjuna, I take pleasure, being thrilled at every moment.

Verse 18.77 O King, as I remember that most wonderful form of Lord Krishna, I am struck with even greater wonder, and I rejoice again and again.

Verse 18.78 Wherever there is Krishna, the master of all mystics, and wherever there is Arjuna, the supreme archer, there will also certainly be opulence, victory, extraordinary power, and morality. That is my opinion.

18.74-78 Commentary: The book ends with Sanjaya, the narrator, speaking to the blind King Dhritarashtra. Sanjaya is overwhelmed with joy. He concludes with a powerful formula for success: **Strategy/Grace (Krishna) + Action/Skill (Arjuna) = Victory and Prosperity.** Sanjaya subtly warns the King that since Arjuna has regained his focus and Krishna is on his side, the side of unrighteousness (Dhritarashtra's sons) is destined to fail. Victory belongs to where Truth and Morality reside.

Marvelous Gita by A Z M Alamgir

Epilogue: Some Relevant Thoughts

In conclusion, I present some universal concepts. The body and the soul are not the same; they are two distinct entities. The body is material and perishable; it will eventually be destroyed. But the soul is living and conscious. There is no destruction for the soul. That which is imperishable is eternal (Shashwat). That which is eternal is called Sanatan. The soul is Sanatan.

Even when nothing existed in the universe, the soul existed. The soul is the most ancient (Prachin) or primeval (Purana). Therefore, the "Religion of the Soul" is the most ancient or primeval religion.

Religion (Dharma) refers to the inherent nature or essence of something—its character, characteristics, and qualities. The way or law by which something naturally functions is its Dharma. Human religion is the religion of the soul because the soul, not the body, is the true identity of a human. It is said:

"Allah created you from a single soul." (Al-Quran 4:1)

Human religion is the oldest religion—the religion of the soul, the eternal or Sanatan Dharma. Regardless of formal religion, caste, place, or time, the soul of every human in the world is the same. Therefore, the religion of

all humans is one: the religion of the eternal soul. In this sense, the religion of all humanity is Sanatan Dharma. It is said:

"Verily! This Ummah (community) of yours is a single Ummah, and I am your Lord." (Al-Quran 21:92)

All humans belong to a single race—the human race. Their religion is one—the religion of the soul. But driven by ignorance or malice, humans have divided their religion into many parts. Thus it is said:

"But they (men) have cut their affair (of unity) between them into sects, each party rejoicing in that which is with it. So leave them in their ignorance for a time." (Al-Quran 23:53-54)

According to Sanatan philosophy, the original and eternal religion is Sanatan Dharma, applicable to all and the only truth. On the other hand, Islam states that Islam is the original and first religion—the eternal and only true religion chosen for all humanity. The Quran says:

"This day I have perfected for you your religion... and have chosen for you Islam as your religion." (Al-Quran 5:3)

The question arises: which is the truly chosen religion for humanity? Sanatan Dharma or Islam?

All humans are created from one soul. The religion of that

soul is the true religion of all living entities (Jivatma). What is that soul? The all-pervading Supreme Soul (Paramatma), God or Allah, is the source of everything. Every individual soul possesses the qualities of the Supreme Soul. Just as a particle of gold is still gold, the individual soul, as a manifestation of the Supreme, shares His qualities. The "religion" of God/Allah is imposed upon all.

However, there is a difference between the individual soul (Jivatma) and the Supreme Soul (Paramatma). When trapped in material nature, the individual soul is influenced by material qualities (Gunas), leading to a deviation from its true religion. It cannot remain established in its real form. But the Supreme Soul, though residing in everyone's heart, is never influenced by material qualities. He is Nirguna (beyond qualities), imperishable, and unchanging. This deviation of the individual soul from the nature of the Supreme Soul is "unrighteousness" (Adharma).

Therefore, the individual soul must regain the nature or state of the Supreme Soul. This is called attaining God. The Gita repeatedly mentions attaining the state of Brahman. Brahman and Paramatma are different manifestations of the same Supreme God.

Similarly, Islam states one must attain Allah—remaining

established in the original nature (Fitra) of Allah. As it is said:

"So set your face steadily and truly to the Faith: (establish) Allah's handiwork according to the pattern on which He has made mankind... that is the standard Religion, but most among mankind understand not." (Al-Quran 30:30)

The truth is, Sanatan Dharma and Islam speak of the same essence. What we commonly see as "religion"—rituals, fasts, pilgrimages, prayers (Namaj), or Hajj—are not the ultimate Dharma itself. These are means, paths, or techniques to keep a human established in the religion of the soul. These institutional rules help the individual soul return to its true form and prevent it from straying.

Institutional rules are necessary for social discipline and guiding the masses, but they are not the only way. There are non-institutional paths as well. To be established in religion is to surrender to the will and direction of God/Allah. This is "Surrender"—the submission of the small individual soul to the Supreme Soul. The philosophy of Sanatan Dharma and Islam is identical here:

"Abandon all varieties of religion and just surrender unto Me." (Gita 18:66)

"Truly, the religion with Allah is Islam (Submission to His Will)." (Al-Quran 3:19)

"And whoever seeks a religion other than Islam, it will never be accepted of him..." (Al-Quran 3:85)

Surrender to God is the only chosen religion for all people. In this sense, the religion of all humans is one. The core message is the same; only the names differ.

Where do we find God? How do we surrender? It is said:

"Allah comes between a man and his heart." (Al-Quran 8:24)

"The Supreme Lord is situated in everyone's heart." (Gita 18:61)

God resides in the heart. Therefore, one must learn to hear the message of the heart.

"But it is clear signs in the hearts of those who have been given knowledge." (Al-Quran 29:49)

Understanding the inner meaning is not easy. The heart can inspire both good and evil. Therefore, one must surrender to a heart enriched with "Divine Wealth" (Daivi Sampad). Before surrendering, one must cultivate divine qualities within their nature. Otherwise, the "demonic" impulses of the heart may lead to destruction. This is why the Gita says the self is its own friend and its own enemy (Gita 6:5).

This concept of surrendering to the heart is for the wise—those who can distinguish between good and evil. For the general masses, following scriptural injunctions is better.

The God of the Sanatanist is the same as the God of the Muslim. There is no separate Creator for different groups.

"Allah is our Lord and your Lord." (Al-Quran 42:15)

All differences arise from human ignorance. Allah, Bhagavan, Ishwar, or God does not care about these man-made divisions. Humans must remove their own ignorance.

At a deep level of knowledge, Sanatan Dharma is Islam, and Islam is Sanatan Dharma. It is the religion of the soul, the religion of humanity—the most ancient and eternal truth. Some say Ibrahim, some say Abraham—the person is the same. The names Allah, Bhagavan, or God differ due to language and definitions created by man, but the Provider is one.

While rituals vary by time and place (like calling H2O "Pani" or "Jol"), the essence remains. Scientists use scientific names to avoid confusion. Perhaps it is time to use a "scientific" understanding of God to reduce the mental barriers and hatred born of ignorance.

In truth, no one yet knows God or the Universe with absolute certainty; if they did, there would be no need for so many theories. These are various philosophies. Most people believe what they were born into.

God is merciful. He has shown the path of light through scriptures and messengers. He wants humans to be grateful. He wants us to transcend material attractions through devotion and love. He seeks unadulterated devotion.

"If one offers Me with love and devotion a leaf, a flower, fruit or water, I will accept it." (Gita 9:26)

"It is not their meat nor their blood that reaches Allah: it is your piety that reaches Him." (Al-Quran 22:37)

Throughout history, those who failed to understand the essence of God's message and acted with pride and ego were destroyed. He uprooted them and replaced them with others.

"...If you turn back, He will substitute in your stead another people; then they would not be like you." (Al-Quran 47:38)

Power is not for enjoyment or pride; it is a blessing and a test from God. It is also a hidden technique to remove the powerful if they stray. It depends on how the powerful behave.

"If you become conscious of Me, you will pass over all the obstacles of conditional life by My grace. If, however, you do not work in such consciousness but act through false ego... you will be lost." (Gita 18:58)

"He might try you, which of you is best in deeds." (Al-Quran 11:7)

The Mahabharata contains many lessons for humanity. The war at Kurukshetra is one such example. Those who displayed ego, conspired, and abused power were destroyed. Duryodhana's greed for power ruined all joy and potential in a short span of time. All those who assisted him became equal partners in that sin. The core message of all religions is one!

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(The original published book is in Bengali language. Little deviation may occur in this machine translated version.)

END